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THE GIFT OF THE

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Of Boston,

6 January, 1860.

TRUE WOMANHOOD:

A TALE:

By JOHN NEAL.

"The heart is like the sky — a part of Heaven!
And changes night and day too, like the sky;
Now o'er it, clouds and thunder *must* be driven;
And darkness and destruction, as on high."

BYRON.

BOSTON:
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TO THE READER.

At last I have consented. I give up. I can hold out no longer. Yielding to the suggestions of Longfellow, Allibone, and I know not how many others, I have consented to write one more story.

Not being satisfied with the doings of my earlier manhood, Logan, Seventy-Six, Randolph, Errata, Brother Jonathan, Rachel Dyer, Authorship, &c. &c. &c., and having little time and no heart for a proper revision of the whole, though constantly urged to the work by a troublesome conscience, I have at last compounded the matter in this way, at the urgent solicitation of these friends, that I may leave something behind to justify their good opinion of me, and something that my children's children may neither be ashamed of, nor sorry for, hereafter.

Having long entertained a notion that women have souls — or something of the sort, call them what you may; that they have not only a right to think for themselves, but to act for themselves, and take the consequences, here and hereafter, without being accountable to us, any more than we are to them; and that marriage is not always the best thing, nor the one thing needful for them, whatever it may be to us; I have written this tale for illustration.

Though not properly a religious novel, I trust the reader will find in it enough religious feeling, without sectarianism, for every-day use, and not enough to be troublesome, or obtrusive, or unpalatable; or, in other words, "none to hurt" — as the man said, when asked if a mutual friend had not grown pious.

Taking advantage of incidents, which occurred in the great commercial paroxysm of 1857–8, and of the phenomena which attended the religious awakening that followed over land and sea, bursting out like prairie-fires in different parts of the country at the same time, and without any visible communication, just as it is now in Ireland, Scotland, and over a part of Northern Europe, to show how different characters and temperaments are differently affected by the very same events and circumstances, and how they are brought to different conclusions by the very same evidence, I have undertaken to set forth what True Womanhood is equal to, and capable of, under some of the most trying circumstances of life. J. N.

PORTLAND, Me., August 25, 1859.

TRUE WOMANHOOD.

CHAPTER I.

On a cold, bright clear day, in the troubled winter of 1857–8, when the great city of New York seemed to be struck with paralysis, and the "boldest held their breath" for awhile, a large crowd were gathered just outside of the Park; while, on the opposite side of the way, there was another and yet larger collection, filling the street and side-walks, and surging and struggling about the open doors of a theatre.

The Park itself was emptied, and the City Hall, and the courts of justice, and all the avenues and approaches were silent, with only here and there a solitary straggler hurrying through the grounds just covered with a light snow, or muffled up to the eyes, and loitering on the way out, as if waiting for the mob to disperse. Beggars, and thieves, and Irish laborers, and ragged match-girls, and prize-fighters, and Bowery-boys, were intermingled with well-dressed men, and stylish-looking women; and shop-boys with parcels, and porters with large bundles and baskets, were hurrying hither and thither along the outskirts of the crowd, or elbowing their way through scattered groups of quiet well-behaved persons, just within the gates. All eyes were turned toward the city clock, then about to sound the hour of twelve.

"What on earth is going to happen, Sir?" said a young fellow, with a girlish look and a fashionable air, turning slowly as he spoke, toward a large, handsome, thoughtful-looking man, who stood bracing himself up, against all these troublesome in-

terlopers, with his back to a tree, and his right arm round the waist of a young woman, evidently frightened, though she answered the speaker with a pleasant smile. "Do they have plays here at noonday, as at Bartlemy Fair?"

"Not just here, my boy,—but over there," pointing through the leafless trees, toward Barnum's, "they have them at all hours of the day."

"Well, but I should be glad to know whether —— ah!"

At this moment, the clock sounded through the clear wintry air, like the tolling of a cathedral bell afar off; and the great, silent, breathless multitude began heaving with life, and the strange, deep stillness became a sort of smothered roar, beginning over the way, and coming nearer and nearer, and growing louder and louder every moment.

"Not another Astor-House riot, I hope," said the young woman, growing very pale, and clinging to the arm that upheld her.

"No, my love, nothing of the kind. Be patient awhile—don't be frightened—we are perfectly safe here; and the mystery will soon be cleared up, I dare say."

"Upon my word, Cousin Julia, I should think somebody was going to the scaffold, or that another Cunningham tragedy was in rehearsal; but the rush seems to be over now, and they appear to be breaking up."

"Yes, Arthur,—all breaking up and going about their business, for they are too late."

"Too late, Sir!"

"Even so. The clock has struck, the door is closed, and it may be, *forever*."

Arthur looked troubled and perplexed; but after a little consideration, he brightened up, and peering into Julia's mournful eyes, with a mischievous expression, he replied,—"But they seem to care very little for their disappointment, Sir."

Julia turned away from his look.

"And then too, how wonderfully quiet they are, as they hurry off toward the great avenue yonder. What do they call that, Uncle George?"

"That is Broadway, Arthur; our principal thoroughfare."

"Ah! not the Broadway I have heard so much of, and so longed to see, and have felt so well acquainted with, ever since my boyhood, hey?"

"Perhaps not, Arthur," said Uncle George, stopping short and facing him with a pleasant smile; "not the broad way you have heard most of, I am quite sure; the broad way we are all so fond of loitering in, whatever may be our age or experience."

"Oh, I understand you now!" said Arthur, turning away with a gesture of impatience; "but, hadn't we better be going? The side-walks are pretty clear now; and if we cross over, perhaps we may find out the reason of the gathering. What say you, Julia?"

"With all my heart! —— ah! ——"

At this moment, a sound like that of a battle anthem, from a multitudinous host within the theatre, was heard, shaking the walls, and rolling away through the wintry air, till there was another stoppage along Chambers Street, up to the corner of Broadway, and the words,

> "Bring forth the royal diadem,
> And crown him Lord of all!"

were caught up and repeated, by group after group, around the doors of the theatre.

Arthur stood as if struck speechless with amazement; and then, after wondering awhile, he turned toward Julia with a bow, and exclaimed, "And so! these are your famous *matinées musicales* we have heard so much of, in your drawing-rooms and newspapers! Upon my word, Uncle George, I must say that I was not altogether prepared for this, though I have heard very strange stories, over sea, about the musical *furore* of my beloved countrymen; but the idea of interloping a Methodist hymn, at a morning concert for the fashionables of New York, does indeed go far beyond the most extravagant hopes I had formed of our people."

Uncle George said nothing, but looked very much pleased, as he drew Cousin Julia away; nor did he vouchsafe one word of explanation, till they had crossed the street, when he stopped suddenly before the chief entrance of the crowded theatre, where

many, who could not force their way through, stood listening, and some with downcast eyes and wet lashes, though nothing was to be heard but a far-off multitudinous rhythm, like that of the summer sea, when its heavy undulations are felt along the shore at dead of night, and the solid earth answers to the pulsation, as to prayer.

"As I live!" said Arthur, pointing toward a large placard by the doorway, as if he saw a spectre, — "As I live — *a prayer-meeting!*"

"Even so, young man," said a stranger, who had been watching the party, — a white haired, middle-aged man, with a fresh countenance, and beautiful eyes, leaning forward on a large gold-headed cane, and trembling, as he spoke, with a visible joy, — "Even so, young man, as the Lord liveth, and as thy soul liveth, a prayer-meeting!"

Uncle George and the venerable man here interchanged a look, and were instantly on the best of terms. Both had the gift of tongues, and speech was no longer needed. They understood each other, as the angels above may, without speech.

"But a prayer-meeting in a theatre!" whispered Julia, with a troubled expression; which led the stranger to say, "And why not, poor child; can thee tell me where it would be more needed?"

"But a prayer-meeting at noonday, my dear Sir!" exclaimed Arthur, with a feeling he had not manifested before. "At noonday, and in the busiest city of our land!"

"And not only in the busiest city of our land, my dear young friend, but in the busiest part of the city, as well as at the busiest hour of the day."

"For idlers, and gossips, and loafers of both genders, and all genders," added Arthur, looking at Julia, and beginning to feel rather mischievous; for the dear old gentleman had many listeners, and the stillness round about was uncomfortable, and the outside pressure, though gentle, was growing heavier and heavier.

"No, Arthur," said Uncle George, "not wholly for idlers, and gossips, and loafers of both genders, though of such is the kingdom of Heaven."

"Goodness me, Uncle George! what *do* you mean!" said Julia.

"Are we not all gossips, and idlers, and loafers, dear child? all alike spendthrifts and prodigals?"

And the stranger added, in a low voice, "Why stand ye here *idle* all the day long? were the words of the Master, when he called for the laborers;" and then, after a pause, he continued, "Are there not publicans and sinners everywhere? Is it the righteous only that are called? Are we not assured that harlots and publicans shall enter the kingdom before us?"

Julia began to look frightened.

"Yes, dear Julia. The righteous need no repentance. They want no Saviour. They are sufficient for themselves."

"The whole need no physician," added the stranger, with a gentle seriousness, that went to the heart of Arthur, as he turned slowly away.

"No, Arthur," continued Uncle George, "not for idlers, and loafers, and gossips, only; but for the busiest men of the age, who best know the value of time, and who, I am told, are beginning to make a business of prayer, and who rush to these gatherings as to high change, or to the Custom-House when clearing a ship, or to the Post-Office, or to a meeting of the board of brokers."

"And all this, my dear Sir," said Arthur, after satisfying himself that Uncle George was in downright earnest, "all this, in the great noisy Babylon of New York! Of a truth, Sir, the world must be coming to an end."

"The world *is* coming to an end, my dear boy."

Arthur grew more thoughtful.

"And everywhere the same," continued Uncle George, in a low dreamy voice, very much as if talking to himself, while Arthur and Julia interchanged a look of surprise, almost of alarm. "Everywhere! at Philadelphia, Chicago, Cincinnati, and eastward, through all the New-England States, in Upper and Lower Canada, and along the shores of the Pacific, thousands and tens of thousands are filling the largest public halls of our country, and most of the churches, not only every day in the week, but almost every hour of the day, morning, noon, and

night; and what is yet more wonderful, ships are coming in with their whole crews '*converted*,' as they call it, upon the high-seas, and the voice of midnight prayer is heard from solitary houses, and remote neighborhoods, having little or no communication with the rest of the world."

"All easily enough accounted for, Uncle George," said Arthur.

"Indeed!"

"Every generation has to undergo something of the sort, Sir."

"Certainly, dear Arthur, certainly, or what would become of the world?"

"And about a hundred years ago, in the days of Whitefield, there was a shaking among the dry bones you know, such as a ——"

"Arthur Maynard!"

"Forgive me, Sir, I did not mean to speak irreverently; but having Whitefield's very words in my mind, I used them without much consideration. There was a revival, you know, which lasted many years, and swept over the whole of this country, and a large part of England."

"Yes, Arthur, but no such revival as they have now, it would seem; for no such tumultuous outbreaks, no such ecstacies, have happened, and no counterfeit or spurious transformations have been charged, as were frequent in that day, and almost characteristic, we are told."

"I have seen it stated in a religious paper of high character," said Julia, "that in our country, more than three thousand a day have been converted, week after week, since last October. Can this be true, Sir, do you believe?"

"It seems to be true, my dear; and, judging by the testimony of the secular papers, the Morning Herald, and Tribune for example, every day seems to be a day of Pentecost for the land, though not for neighborhoods or cities."

"I am afraid religion is getting to be fashionable," said Julia.

"I hope so, with all my heart."

"*Why!* Uncle George!" exclaimed Julia.

"As in the day of Constantine, Sir?" suggested Arthur.

"Not altogether. I would have it unselfish, uncalculating,

and sincere, not only with the great unreasoning multitude, but with kings, and princes, and lawgivers; for they, too, have souls to be saved."

"But *fashionable*, Sir?"

"Yes, Arthur, fashionable. One thing is clear. This earth will not be regenerated, the brethren will not dwell together in unity, the Saviour will not be wanted, till men are no longer ashamed of Him; in other words, till religion has become fashionable."

"The strangest man!" said Arthur, stooping forward to whisper with Julia; "seems to be a good deal of a Methodist, hey?"

"So was Havelock," said Julia.

"But," added Uncle George,—and again he stopped, as if unwilling to leave the subject,—"I would have you bear in mind, both of you, dear children, that we have had neither pestilence nor earthquake to fill our churches; no failure of crops, no cities laid in ashes, no fleets of merchantmen strewing the shore with wrecks, or foundering at sea, with all their golden cargoes; and as for the ——"

Arthur had just left the side of Julia, and was coming round where he could hear better, when a large boy was pushed against them, and then there was a sudden rush, a faint cry from Julia, the sound of a smart, quick blow, and a rough looking fellow pitched headlong into the gutter before them.

"Arthur! dear Arthur!" screamed Julia, as he sprang forward, with his collar open, his hat off, and his brown hair flying loose, and stood waiting for the vagabond to move.

"Arthur Maynard, stop! are you mad! look to Julia, Sir, and leave the scoundrel to me!" said Uncle George, just as the newsboys and boot-blacks began shouting at the top of their voices, "a fight! a fight! form a ring! form a ring!" and straightway the apple-women sprang to their tables and baskets, and the hackney-coachmen to their horses.

Arthur made no reply, but stood, looking very pale, and breathing hard, as the fellow gathered himself up slowly, and inch by inch, as it were, evidently meaning mischief; but in moving a step or two nearer his man, Arthur felt something crush under his foot, and on looking down, saw a heavy gold

chain, which had been snatched from Julia's neck, without her knowledge, when the great lubberly boy pushed against her, and was stooping to pick it up, when a by-stander, a confederate, interfered, and levelling a blow at Arthur's uncovered head, must have stretched him at full length upon the side-walk, but for the timely interference of Uncle George, who sprang upon the fellow, and catching him by the throat, shook him till his teeth chattered; very much as a huge mastiff would shake a nasty cur.

"Here comes the Police! here they come!" shouted the boys,

"Just in from drill," said a by-stander.

"Don't be frightened, my love," said Uncle George, as the regular tramp of what appeared to be a large body of men, marching in silence, but with the greatest military precision, drew near. "I see the Superintendent himself — be quiet, Sir! — and half a score of policemen hurrying up, — will you be quiet, Sir!" giving the fellow another shake, which set all the boys a laughing.

"That's the talk, Sir! give it to him!" shouted a well-dressed man, with gray hair, and a white neckcloth, winking at the same time to the by-standers, and then thrusting his tongue into his cheek.

"Hurrah for the Parson! hurrah for Billy Swipes! hurrah!" screamed the boys, tumbling about in every direction, as the blue coats and glittering badges of the police began to appear among the trees.

"Clear the way! clear the way!" shouted a large, powerful man, with a voice like a trumpet, the eye of a hawk, and a countenance that Stuart or Trumbull would have been delighted with.

"Hurrah for the Superintendent! Hurrah for Talmadge! Hurrah for the Recorder!" and instantly, as if a thunderbolt had fallen in their midst, the mob scattered right and left, and the Superintendent, with five or six followers, came through the Park gate, and across the street, with their coats buttoned up close, and a short, uneasy-looking bludgeon sticking out of their side-pockets.

"Halt! silence there! Look to the lady, Page! This way, Holmes! watch that fellow in the gutter there; he's for clawing off, you see!"

"Ay, ay, Sir!"

"Call a carriage, Fred!" to a young man at his elbow in a citizen's dress; "and look to the young lady yourself, will you?"

"With all my heart, Sir!" said the young man, bowing to Julia, who stood near, with her hands clasped, her veil flying loose, and trembling from head to foot.

"Ah, General! Good morning to you," said Uncle George, turning away his eyes for a moment from the burly knave he was throttling, and not a little amused with the promptitude, the quiet energy, and the military precision of the Superintendent.

"Ah, Pendleton, is that you? Good morning; how are you to-day? We have been hoping to see you at the drill."

"I meant to be with you, but a ——"

"Over three hundred out in this division, and all about such as you see here;" whereupon most of the boys and ragamuffins of all ages began to steal away; "good men and true, — ready for anything."

Here some of the outsiders began whispering; and not a few threatening looks were interchanged, with many a portentous shake of the head.

"Fifteen hundred, Major, all told."

"Enough to garrison the city, my dear General."

"Hope to have three thousand before the winter is through."

"May be wanted, Sir, if these meetings are allowed to continue in Tompkins' Square."

"Not so loud, if you please. We are watched, and every word will be reported. There are listeners and eaves-droppers all round us."

"But nothing to fear, come what may," said Uncle George, upheaving his broad chest and looking about upon the rabble with a compassionate smile.

"Nothing, my dear Sir, with fifteen hundred of such men," looking upon the people, and speaking loud enough to be heard, "thoroughly trained, and" — with a significant smile, "*armed with revolvers.*"

The mob drew further off, and their growling and muttering died away in low murmurs, and occasional whispers.

"But, I say, Pendleton, what's in the wind here? what's to pay?"

"Nothing very serious, my dear Sir, and yet we are heartily glad to see you and your fellows."

The General shook his head. His *fellows* were not soldiers from the Crimea, and of course were in no humor to be called anything less than gentlemen.

"They were never more wanted by daylight, I promise you. Julia, my love, why don't you go? don't be frightened, the trouble is all over now; just step into Stewart's with the gentleman, and wait for us there, will you?"

"If you please, madam," said the General, with a courtly bow. "The lady is in your charge, Fred."

Arthur turned to follow.

"No! no, my boy, you may be wanted," said Uncle George, "we cannot spare you."

At this moment, somebody called the attention of the Superintendent to the fellow Uncle George had been holding by the throat.

"God bless me, Pendleton, what are you doing?" said he, "don't strangle the poor fellow!"

"Shame! shame!" shouted a bystander.

"Shame! shame!" repeated half a score of outsiders, "let him go! let him go!"

"God forgive me! what have I done?" said Uncle George, turning away with a look of horror, and covering his face with his hands.

"Look to him, Peters! bear a hand there, Williams, don't let him pitch into the street! give way there!" said the Superintendent, as the man staggered off, with his tongue lolling out, and all purple about the mouth.

The two policemen sprang forward, but before they could reach the poor fellow, there was a sudden rush, followed by a great hubbub and hustling about their way, with shouts of laughter, and cries of "Well done, Billy! hurrah for you, Billy! run for your life! down with the Police! hurrah!"

Whereupon the boys began tumbling about like mad. The apple-women laughed, and even the Superintendent smiled, as he hurried away into the thickest of the crowd.

"Hurrah for Talmadge! hurrah for the Police! hurrah!" yelled the raggedest and happiest of the smaller boys, pitching head over heels into the street, and rolling over in the gutter by dozens, while their outcries never stopped for a moment, — "hurrah! hurrah!"

"I say, Joe, wan't that slick!" screamed a little barefooted wretch with a ragged apron flying about his legs, while he bobbed in and out among the horses' feet, with a great lump, or *junk* as he called it, of lollipop sticking out of his mouth.

"I tell *you!*" was the knowing reply of another boy, as he capered about hither and thither like a bunch of crackers, trying to get a peep at the doings outside, where it appeared the man had just been 'overhauled' and was fairly in charge of a policeman.

No sense of cold troubled these ragged, starving boys, though it was midwinter, and they looked pinched with hunger, and the sharp wind was blowing through and through the padded overcoats and rich furs of the well-dressed and warmly-clothed about them.

"Anything more, Pendleton?" said the Superintendent, coming up with a generous flush upon his old-fashioned, revolutionary face, and looking very much delighted with the adventure.

"Why yes, that gentleman there in the ragged roundabout, who seems to have no idea of getting up, while my young friend is within reach, may need a little of your attention."

"Indeed! up with you, Sir!" said the General, taking him by the collar, and setting him on his feet with a jerk.

"And that other very respectable man, you see there with the white cravat and gold-headed cane," lowering his voice and pointing to a by-stander, who had been the first to cry 'shame! shame!' Though dressed in black, and gray-haired, with gold spectacles, I have an idea from what I have seen, that, if the gentleman is not a confederate, he is at least entitled to your special consideration, just now, for intermeddling."

Here the man referred to began to grow uneasy; and as the consultation was carried on with a somewhat mysterious look, he left his perch, and was moving away, with a calm, lofty, almost unimpeachable air of dignity, when the Superintendent called

after him to *stop!* giving a signal at the same time to No. 5, as he called him, which appeared to be understood, for he stepped in front of the gentleman, and begged of him, with a bow, to be so obliging as to take off his spectacles.

"Take off my spectacles, you scoundrel! what d'ye mean by that, hey?"

"Pooh, pooh!" said the policeman—or detective rather—for he was one of that renowned body, who are all eyes and ears, and always on the alert.

"*Really!*" said the Superintendent, coming near enough to judge for himself. "Oh, ho! is that you, my fine fellow? Away with him, Sir!"

The detective laid his hand very gently upon the gentleman's collar, and they walked off together like old acquaintances, without another word.

"One of the most dangerous thieves upon our list, my dear Sir," said the Superintendent; "and if you will take the trouble to drop into our office in Broome Street," handing a card, "we will show you his daguerréotype, along with half a hundred others you will stand a good chance of becoming acquainted with, if you stop here this winter, and do not eschew these little street-gatherings. Good morning, Major."

"Good morning, General."

A bow, with a few brief words of acknowledgment, followed by the interchange of cards, and a suggestion that witnesses would be wanted before the Recorder, and the two thieves and their well-dressed, gray-haired confederate were marched off to the station-house, while the Superintendent, who had just received a communication from head quarters, by telegraph, started off upon the track of a wretched boy from the neighborhood of New York, who had stabbed a man to the heart on the Sabbath evening before, while walking home quietly, through a broad, handsome street, with his wife upon his arm.

"Your hat, I believe, Sir," said a youth, who had taken charge of Arthur's hat from the first, holding it behind him, however, till the young man had begun to feel rather uncomfortable, and was looking round for it.

"Much obliged."

"Handsomest '*one-two*,' I ever saw, Sir," winking. "Straight as a cannon ball!"

Arthur blushed and looked rather ashamed; Uncle George grew more and more thoughtful; and when they found Julia, though not fifteen minutes had passed, poor thing! she was well-nigh speechless, and complained of being tired to death waiting for them. She had but just missed her heavy gold chain, the gift of a dead mother, and was but beginning to understand, though not very clearly, what had happened.

On their way to the St. Nicholas, Arthur tried to explain the whole affair to Uncle George; but Uncle George only shook his head in silence, not being half satisfied with himself.

"But Uncle, dear Uncle, what would you have done?" whispered Julia, as the trouble she saw in poor Arthur's countenance, and the sorrow she felt for herself, and the mournful earnestness, deep stillness, and slow step, almost remorseful, of her beloved uncle, began to weigh heavily upon her.

"I dare not say, God forgive me!" said Uncle George, drawing a long breath, and looking piteously into Arthur's eyes.

"But with your great bodily strength, Sir?"

"I cannot answer for myself, dear children. God only knows! I tremble when I think what might have happened. I ought to be magnanimous, or at least forgiving."

"Dear Uncle!"

CHAPTER II.

On reaching the St. Nicholas, and seating themselves in the sumptuous parlor, they found a notice of arrangements made for a private box at the opera, with invitations for two or three dinner parties, cards from people they had never met with, nor heard of before, and the daughters of a family they had known abroad, with their maiden aunt, all waiting for them, on their way to Stewart's, where they assured Miss Julia she would find the loveliest India shawls, and the latest fashioned silks, selling at half price, and the richest of laces to be had for the asking.

"Why! would you believe it! Miss Parry," said the eldest of the party, — an over-dressed woman of threescore, with half a dozen little parcels in her lap," — everybody is failing; the most beautiful things you ever saw, real *bijouterie*, I assure you, are just about given away; silk dresses we used to pay fifty, seventy-five, or a hundred dollars for, may now be had for one half; at our own price, indeed, for that's what they all say, — don't they Sallie? And if you'll believe me, even Alexandre's gloves are now selling for seventy-five cents a pair!"

"Can it be possible!" whispered Cousin Arthur to Julia, without looking up, or turning his head.

The elderly gentlewoman heard the whisper; stared, fidgetted, and just as two or three exclamations followed, such as, "Not Alexandre's, Aunty!" — "Seventy-five cents a pair! how much is that?" — "Six shillings, my love,' '&c. &c., — dropped one of the parcels, and before Arthur, who sprang from the chair with uncommon alacrity, could pick it up, let fall another, and then, with great seriousness and benignity, assured him, upon her honor, that she knew it to be a fact, having herself "*laid in*" a whole dozen but a day or two before, at the price mentioned.

"And then, too," added Sallie, a large, dark-eyed, showy brunette, with a saucy, self-satisfied air, but *so* listless, and *so* languishing, and *so* changeable in her adaptations, whenever she found herself under the eyes of any *comme il faut* personage, of the available gender, that they who best knew her were most amazed at her altered manner—"and then, too, only to think of it! All the banks failing, all your friends giving up their carriages, and discharging their servants, and the largest wholesale houses turning retailers—I declare it is quite sad."

"Very sad, very! What will become of us?" exclaimed another of the party, with a flourish of her perfumed handkerchief.

"A question I have heard repeated fifty times a day since I have been here," said Uncle George, looking up from a newspaper large enough to cover the table. "Here is the failure of a Wall Street brokerage for four millions, I see; and—why, bless my heart! can it be possible!—here is the assignment of a great railway company, after the expenditure of forty millions!"

"Ah, indeed!—well, I declare!"

"But then," added Sallie, with a sort of lisp, very fashionable at the time, not only in our large cities, but, like the Jenny Lind curtsy, dip and wriggle, in some of our manufacturing villages and 'back settlements,'—"there is no saying but silks, and laces, and gloves, may be had for next to nothing, or less, before the week is over;" and then there was a giggle.

"Gloves! my dear? not gloves, I will answer for it; not Alexandre's, you may be sure," said Aunt Marie, as she insisted on being called, from the day our hearty, old-fashioned English names of Mary and Elizabeth and Sarah had been superseded by Marie and Lizzie and Sallie, and other like pitiful substitutions of bad French,—always bad at the best, but unbearable, as now spoken or written.

"Well, well, Aunty."

Aunty gave her a look, and then bridling up, and rustling all over, added, "No, no, my dear, not Alexandre's; never, never!"

"And why not, pray? Why shouldn't gloves *come down*, as well as other things?"

"Because, my dear, and you'll pardon me for saying that where a man has a monopoly—a *monopoly*, child,"—glancing

triumphantly at Uncle George, who was evidently wide awake,—"and supplies all the rest of the dealers, like Stewart, why, of course, he may command his own price. You are old enough to understand that, my love?"

"No, Aunty, not quite, I'm afraid."

"To be sure," added Arthur, very much as if thinking aloud, or talking to himself, and glancing at Julia, who understood him too well to afford him any encouragement,—"Nothing could be clearer; and what charmingly familiar and easy lessons one gets, not only in household management and thrift, but in the higher branches of political economy, and in all the mysteries of demand and supply, when such things happen every day."

Sallie stared. The boyish looking whipper-snapper, whom she had hitherto overlooked, and wholly misunderstood, must have something in him, after all, she thought; for he puzzled her, and instead of being taken off his feet by her strangeness of speech, was in a fair way of taking them all off their feet, with his.

Julia understood his drift, and shook her head, in reply, being somewhat apprehensive he might go too far, and then added in a low sweet voice, "Undoubtedly, for some things are only to be learned in this way; and, perhaps, if the banks are all failing, and the largest dealers are becoming retailers, these rich laces, and gloves, and shawls, and trinkets, may be no such great bargain, after all."

Uncle George seemed rather pleased, though a shadow flitted athwart his fine countenance, and there was a troubled look of the eyes, whenever he was left to himself, or they wandered to the newspaper for a moment, which lay wide open before him.

"How so, Miss Parry? I do not understand you."

"Money being so much harder to get, and worth so much more, of course."

"Money worth more, Miss Parry! How can money be worth more at one time than at another, I should be glad to know!" continued Aunt Marie.

"Other property being worth so much less, my dear madam, I might have said; but I beg your pardon."

"Oh, certainly; I understand you, now."

"When money is tight," added Arthur.

Aunt Marie did not much like the tone, though the manner was unexceptionable, for, as he spoke, he laid another parcel in her lap, which had just rolled off, without her knowledge; the lady's plumptitude being somewhat remarkable, and by no means adapted to the transportation of a large assortment of haberdashery, even while sitting. The fact is, Aunt Marie had no lap.

Growing a little red, as she pulled at her glove, with a correspondent nervous twitching of the mouth, she snapped out,—"You will excuse me, Sir, but really, Sir, I must be allowed to say, as I have said before, that I do not well see why money should be worth more at one time than at another; more, when it is *tight*—*tight*, I think you called it, Sir, than at other times, where a lady"—giving her head a toss, and adjusting her shawl—"has a regular income, for example."

It was evidently high time for Uncle George to interfere. "You are right, madam," said he, interrupting Arthur, just as he was about to answer. "Although, as you may satisfy yourself at any time, by looking into these papers, that money commands a much higher rate of interest at one time than at another—just now, for example, when it is worth two per cent a month, and from that to five—still, if the lady's income is so secured, as never to be affected by the depreciation of stocks—or rents—" Aunt Marie began to grow a little nervous—"nor by fluctuations in the money market—or failures—"

Aunt Marie could bear this no longer. "Why, bless my heart, Mr. Pendleton!" said she, growing very pale, "what *do* you mean? Failures! stocks! rents! I declare, I never thought of the matter in this way. Sallie, my dear."

"Well, Aunty."

"Please don't call me Aunty."

"I beg your pardon, Aunt Mary."

"Aunt Marie, child, if you please."

"Certainly, by all means,—Aunt Marie."

"If you have no objection, my dear, I should like a—a—pulling out of her bosom a large, heavy old-fashioned gold watch—a—a—to see Mr. Jessie for a few minutes this morning."

"Jessup, you mean."

"Well then, Jess*up*."

"Before we go to Stewart's?"

"I shall not go to Stewart's this morning, my dear."

"Indeed!"

"No, my love, I have just remembered a little business I have with our agent. Good morning, ladies; good morning, Major Pendleton; I wish you a very good morning, Mr. Maynard. We ladies have to do most of our own business in this country, you know, gentlemen." Moving toward the door, as she spoke, but being somewhat flurried, she dropped another of the little parcels, and then a glove, which Arthur picked up, and was handing to her, when Miss Sallie snatched it from him with a ringing laugh, while her aunt was taking leave of the ladies, and turning down the wrist, called Julia's attention to the mark. Julia did not appear to understand her. "Not Alexandre's, after all," said she, loud enough to be overheard by Arthur. "Hush!"

While poor Julia was wondering what all this could mean, Sallie, the malicious thing, turned to her aunt with a look of innocent, almost childish playfulness, and asked her how Stewart came to sell her such a great bargain in gloves, if he had a monopoly, as she called it."

"Stewart's, my love! did I say Stewart's? I meant Bowen's, — Bowen and Macnamee;" snatching the glove out of her hand; "but they are just exactly as good — not to be distinguished — not a pin to choose."

"But they are large wholesale importers, Aunt Marie."

"To be sure they are, and that's the reason they cost me only five shillings a pair, instead of eight."

"Oh, I understand you; I thought you said six shillings."

"Five shillings, my dear;" growing very red in the face, and twitching again at her glove. "And then you know, Miss Parry, all these stories about Alexandre's gloves are just a trick of the trade; there's no such glove-maker in Paris, you know; and the name of Alexander, Frenchified to Alexandre, is only that of Mr. Stewart himself, you know, the prince of retailers."

"Indeed! I was not aware of the fact," said Julia, with a look of deep interest, dying away at last into a faint smile, not to be mistaken.

"What on earth do you trouble yourself with all these bundles

for?" said Sallie, as another fell out of her aunt's arms. "Why don't you make the people send them after you?"

"It is not always safe to do so. Good morning, ladies; good morning, gentlemen. Of course we shall meet you at the opera this evening," said her aunt; "and then, to-morrow, if you please," turning to Julia, and glancing at two or three other unspeakable creatures upon the sofas and lounges, who had not opened their mouths, and were evidently watching and listening, with a somewhat supercilious air, "to-morrow we will drop into Stewart's, if you say so, my dear, and tumble over the great bargains we hear so much of, and judge for ourselves. We needn't buy a shilling's worth, you know; they don't expect you to buy, these dreadful times," glancing at Uncle George. "What are you laughing at, Sallie Webb? You ought to be ashamed of yourself! Come along, my love;" and then lowering her voice, and twitching violently at the flounce of that "superb mantilla" which had so long been the boast of her niece, and oftentimes of herself, among strangers from the country, she added, "come along, you spiteful 'thing, you! Good morning, all; good-bye! can't stop another minute; bye bye!" and away she sailed under a cloud of — crinoline.

"Bye bye," said Miss Sallie, sailing after her with a swing that swept the whole passage-way like a gust of summer wind. "Good morning; bye bye!" — with a delicate lisp, — "bye bye, Mith Parry;" looking back over her shoulder, and imitating her aunt, so as to set the youngest of the strangers giggling with all her might.

Poor Julia was thunderstruck. On lifting her eyes to Uncle George, and then to Arthur, she saw at once that all the rapid changes of manner and voice, and all that had been most painful and trying to her, even the counterfeit playfulness, and simpering and lisping, had not only been observed and well understood by both, although by each in a different way, and for a different purpose, but would be remembered by both; by Uncle George, with sorrow and pity, and by Arthur, for future use in some way, — perhaps in a magazine article, or a lecture.

After a dreary, though short silence, Uncle George rose and

took the morning paper, and seemed about to sink into a large, deep, luxurious chair—a sort of lounge—when Julia proposed withdrawing to their own private parlor, where they would feel more at home, and where he might read that "everlasting newspaper," as Cousin Arthur called it, at his leisure.

"Or loll about, as you like, with none to molest or make you afraid," whispered Arthur.

"Cousin Arthur!" said Julia, somewhat reproachfully, taking her uncle's arm as she spoke, while Arthur followed with the notes and cards, wondering what made Uncle George so very serious, and so very thoughtful just then.

"Oh, ho!" said he, "I know; it all comes of that confounded prayer-meeting. Always the way! These Christians, as they call themselves—Methodists I call them—if they think they are making other people better or happier, by looking so unhappy themselves, will find themselves wofully mistaken, I fancy, when they come to settle up. Ah, my dear Sir, I am glad to see you," he added, on hearing somebody cough in the doorway. It was the very stranger they had met with near the chief entrance of Burton's theatre.

"What *have* I been saying?" continued Arthur to himself. "Hope he did'nt hear me,—and yet, how troubled he looks. Won't you step in, Sir, and be seated, while I send up for Uncle George. Your visit is to him, perhaps?"

"No, my young friend, it is to thee."

Arthur bowed.

"Although," continued the stranger, "I should be glad to see thy uncle at another time, and that comely young woman I saw with him and thee. My name is Bayard, William Bayard"——

"And mine, Sir, is Maynard, Arthur Maynard."

"The only son of Harper Maynard, I believe."

"Yes; did you know my father, Sir?"

"Know thy father, young man! He was the dearest friend I had on earth, and one of the best men I ever knew; and I hope thee may be like him, Arthur."

"But he was not a Quaker, Sir, as I see you are."

"We call ourselves Friends."

"To be sure! I beg your pardon; but my father lived and

died an Episcopalian; a Church of England man, as I believe you would call him."

"None the worse for that, friend Arthur. Everywhere, he that worketh righteousness and feareth the Lord is accepted."

"But Mr. Bayard, my dear Sir"—

"Perhaps thee had better call me William, as thy father always did, to the day of his death."

Arthur tried, faltered, blushed, laughed — and gave it up for a bad job.

"No, no, you must excuse me. I cannot call a man of your age, or an old friend of my father, William."

"Well, well, never mind now."

"But are not these liberal views rather at variance with the opinions of your early writers, William Penn, Job Scott, and Robert Barclay, for instance?"

"Not if rightly understood; not if patiently sifted to the bottom. Their testimony was against the corruptions of the Church of England, the pomp and ceremony, the popish ritual, and such things; but how happens it, I pray, that thou art acquainted with the opinions of such men as Robert Barclay, and William Penn, and Job Scott? Has thee ever read 'No Cross no Crown?'"

"Yes, and more than once."

"Indeed! Yet thee seems very young, and perhaps worldly, and if I may judge by what I see, fashionable."

This was said so good naturedly, and with such a pleasant voice, that Arthur could not help smiling, as he thought how Cousin Julia would enjoy the idea of his being called worldly, and *perhaps* fashionable.

"My dear Sir," said he, "let me explain this. In my father's library, there were many books relating to the early history of your faith, from George Fox down; I was fond of journals and travels, and from a very early age used to read almost everything that fell in my way. Seeing my poor father often looking into these old fashioned books, I felt a desire to know what there was in them, and in this way became a little acquainted perhaps with what otherwise I should have been ignorant of — the history of the Quakers."

"The history of the people *called* Quakers, thee would say."

"Certainly, I beg your pardon, Sir."

"Were the old fashioned books thee saw thy father looking over so often, were they" — hesitating, and then with great earnestness, adding — "were they all covered with white parchment?"

"Yes, all, if I remember aright; and I am very sure, as to those I have mentioned."

The stranger wiped his eyes, and there was a slight trembling about his mouth, which bespoke a deep, though subdued emotion.

"Allow me to ask you, my dear Sir, if you remember these books?"

"Are they still in thy father's library?"

"They are now in mine, Sir."

"In thine!"

"Yes, at any rate, they were so, when I left England."

"But how came they to be in thy library?"

"Well, Sir, I suppose I may as well own up. My father took it into his head that I was very fond of them — all a mistake, my dear Sir; but as they were the gift of an old friend of his youth, and associated, as he told me, with events which had changed the whole current of his life, and sent him abroad an outcast and adventurer, I had'nt the heart to undeceive him."

"Arthur Maynard, is thy mother living?"

Arthur was about to reply, when the stranger rose hurriedly from his chair, and went to the window, and threw it up, as if to breathe more freely.

"God bless me! Are you faint, Sir?"

The stranger made a motion with his hand, but gave no answer, till he dropped into a chair by the open window, and then, after a short struggle, he added, in a sweet, calm, low voice, "thee did not answer my question, I believe?"

"No Sir, but my dear mother is living and well, or was when we left her, less than three months ago."

The old man clasped his hands, and looked up, as if in prayer, with his chin quivering.

"If thee will open the books thee mentioned, Arthur Maynard, thee will find the name of William Bayard on the title-page."

"As I live, my dear Sir, I remember it! And you are that William Bayard — are you! — that dearest friend of my father, and perhaps of my mother?"

"*Perhaps* of thy mother, dear youth; but I must go now; I hope to see thee again, however."

"But you would like to see Cousin Julia, and Uncle George, before you go; shall I send up for them?"

"No, not now, not now;" pressing both hands upon his chest, and trembling from head to foot. "Some other day; farewell."

"One moment, Sir. You said, if I remember, that your errand was for me."

"For myself, rather."

"How so? — I don't understand."

"Nor will thee, dear youth, until thee knows everything. Hereafter, when I have satisfied myself upon two or three points, which may deeply concern thee, I shall endeavor to explain myself."

The old man had reached the door, and was fumbling at the lock, as if undetermined what to do. At last, after another short struggle, he turned to Arthur, and taking both hands into his, and looking at him as if he were about to say, farewell forever and ever, he murmured —

"The very image of his mother!"

"I have been told so, from my earliest childhood."

"One thing, dear Arthur, I may tell thee now. It was the likeness to thy mother, when I saw thee with thy hat off, thy collar open, and thy plentiful brown hair blowing about thy face, while standing over that wretched man, who had just fallen before thee, wherein thy father's temper, before he was a changed man, broke forth so suddenly, that led me to follow thee here;" looking round upon the rich hangings and showy furniture, "a place I was never in before; and now, it may be, that hereafter I shall follow thee, as I did thy dear mother, when the dew of youth was upon me, like her shadow, till thou, too, art changed."

The next moment he was gone — *like* a shadow.

Arthur was bewildered. Though touched by the signs of deep feeling, and heartfelt earnestness of the old man, he could not

help fancying that, perhaps, he might be in his dotage, or a little beside himself. True enough, he remembered — he was quite sure he remembered — the name of William Bayard in the books; and that his father, and he now began to believe, as he thought over all the circumstances, that even his mother had always spoken of them as the gift of a very dear friend; he thought he remembered too, as he went back, year by year, over the past, and recalled the mysterious happenings, and associations of his early youth, of a very dear friend, too, under circumstances never to be forgotten.

Determined to satisfy himself at once, he hurried up to their private parlor, where he found Uncle George, sitting by a table, and leaning his face upon his hands, with heaps of old papers about him.

He had barely time to see, that, although most of them were in files, and carefully arranged, others were lying open, scorched, and shrivelled, and weather-stained, as if they had been gathered from a lumber garret, or snatched from the fire; and was about to withdraw, as he found the Major did not look up, nor move, when Julia shook her head mournfully, he thought, and pointed to a chair.

Arthur obeyed the signal, wondering what the strange, deep stillness meant. Was Uncle George asleep, or lost in thought, or praying silently, as he sometimes did, at the table? He began to feel uneasy, and was almost afraid to move or breathe, when he looked at Julia, and saw the trouble in her eyes, the trembling of her hands, the paleness that had settled upon her sweet face, and the slight nervous twitching about her mouth, as of a long continued, earnest, inward struggle.

"What could be the matter with her? was it only fatigue and weariness? or a little reaction after her fright in Broadway? He was afraid to ask, afraid even to think of the possibilities involved. Among strangers, at a crowded hotel, away from all the soothing associations of home, with nobody to watch over her but the chambermaid she had brought with her from England,— the house they had bargained for undergoing changes and repairs, and his own dear mother afar off, and waiting for them to be settled, — what would become of the poor thing, if she should

give way at last? How beautiful she was, to be sure! how gentle, how affectionate, and how truthful!"

After a long silence, which grew more and more painful and trying, the longer it continued, Arthur began to feel somewhat alarmed, as he looked at Mr. Pendleton, who did not appear to breathe, and made a sign for Julia to speak to him.

But instead of speaking, she went softly up to him, and after listening for a moment, she turned to Arthur with a smile, and then laid her little soft hand gently, very gently, upon her uncle's forehead, but instantly withdrew it, and looked more frightened than ever. The hair was damp, and the flesh so cold as to send a chill to her heart.

A slight scream escaped her at the touch; and she was turning to Arthur with such a piteous look of terror, that he sprang for the bell-rope, when the startled sufferer withdrew her hands from his face, looked about him with a bewildered air, and after a few moments of labored breathing, appeared to recollect himself; and putting his arm around poor Julia's waist, he drew her up to his heart, and kissing her forehead, thanked her with a smile for disturbing him.

"I did not mean to disturb you, dear uncle, I only wanted to smooth your hair, and see for myself whether you were asleep."

"Asleep! my love, no, no, not so bad as that, I hope; not altogether asleep, I believe; but I might as well have been asleep, I see, for I had forgotten that you were here, Arthur; but I thank you both for disturbing me, dear children. I have not slept well of late, and I often lose myself, not so much from sheer exhaustion, as from weariness of spirit."

"Dear uncle!" whispered Julia.

"Is theren othing I can do for you, Sir?" inquired Arthur.

"Nothing, my dear, noble-hearted boy, but," — with great seriousness, — "but you may do much for yourself."

Arthur looked at Julia, who appeared to understand what was meant, for explanation, but she turned away her head, as if unwilling, or perhaps unable to answer.

"But this will never do!" continued the Major, gathering up the loose papers, and thrusting them into a large drawer, of which he took the key; and then glancing at the clock, he added, I

must abroad into the open air; they keep their houses too warm here, altogether too warm, I cannot breathe freely in such an atmosphere;" taking up his hat, and going towards the door.

"Shall I go with you, Sir?" said Arthur, in obedience to a look from Julia.

"No, no, thank you, I shall not be gone long,—just a turn or two around the Park."

"Union Park, Sir?"

"Or up Madison Avenue, or down to the river, I hardly know myself; anywhere, though, for a mouthful of fresh air."

"We shall see you at dinner, Uncle George?"

"Certainly, my love."

"We are engaged for the opera, you know, Sir," added Arthur.

"For the opera? Oh, yes, I remember now, I had wholly forgotten the engagement. Hand me one of the tickets, Julia, so that if anything should happen to detain me from dinner, I may meet you there; and may I not hope to see you looking happier?"

"Happier, Uncle George! happier at an opera, where I never go, but for your sake, and you never go but for mine, I believe."

"Ah, but you are so passionately fond of the opera, Julia," added Arthur.

"*Passionately!* Cousin Arthur? No, no, not so bad as that, I hope. That I am fond of opera music, and of the great masters, Meyerbeer, and Mozart, and Von Weber, I acknowledge; but I have serious objections to the opera, and really am not altogether satisfied with myself when I give way to my *passion* for music, as you call it, Cousin Arthur."

"Oh, ho! I understand you, my little preacher," said Uncle George. "You cannot, for the life of you, see the difference between the theatre and the opera; but good-bye; we'll discuss that subject hereafter, and at our leisure, if you say so,—good-bye; but stop though, I see by the bill that we are to have Robert le Diable. Did I not understand you to say Don Giovanni, my dear?"

"Yes, and it was only for that reason that I consented to take a part of the box, without consulting you; for you told me last week, if you remember, that they were going to perform it for the first time in America, as written."

"All a mistake!" said Arthur, looking at an ivory tablet in his hands, "all a mistake! we are to have Robert le Diable to-night, and after this week Don Giovanni."

"Provoking!" said Julia.

"But we are in for it now, and may as well go."

"I have no desire to go, Cousin Arthur."

"Julia," said Uncle George, stopping in the door-way, for a moment; "I hope you will go nevertheless. I want your help in a matter of importance, and you may depend upon having me with you before it is over—*Deo volente.* Good-bye!"

"Follow him, dear Arthur, follow him without being seen, I pray you; and, for your life, don't lose sight of him!"

"Why, what's the matter Julia? You frighten me."

"I don't know, but something is going to happen, I feel sure. I have had such terrible misgivings to day."

"Why, Cousin Julia! are you growing superstitious, or is it only nervousness?"

"I don't know, Arthur. I don't know what it is, nor what ails me, but I am excessively anxious about Uncle George. I never saw him so before, and I hardly know what I am afraid of; there is a shadow, like that of another world upon me; I feel it growing heavier and heavier,—No, no, don't touch the bell!"

"I am afraid to leave you alone, Julia. Hadn't you better ring for Bessie? She will at least be a ——"

"Not another word, Arthur,—run, run, I beseech you."

Arthur hurried away, and poor Julia, staggering to a chair, and covering her face with her hands, began expostulating with herself, but all to no purpose. The awful shadow would not be conjured down, the darkness grew heavier and heavier; she tried to breathe a prayer, but her apprehensions were so vague, her thoughts and feelings of such a changeable and bewildering character, that she hardly knew what to pray for; and so she started up, after a long struggle with herself, and began pacing the room, stopping for a moment, as she passed the window, to see how fast the snow was falling; then she pulled out her watch, and compared it with a clock over the mantel-piece, which had stopped long before; and with the little gold key in her hand, stood listening and breathless at every passing footstep, without

remembering her first purpose, and murmuring now and then a few broken words of prayer — "Father, dear Father, have pity on us! thou see'st our trouble! O, help and deliver! forsake us not, O most Merciful! help, or we perish!"

Overcome by her feelings at last, the poor child fell upon her knees, and burying her face in the cushions of the sofa, sobbed aloud, hoping and almost believing, in her anguish and terror, that the Spirit was "making intercession for her, with groanings that could not be uttered," and that, when she added "Nevertheless, not my will, but thine be done, O righteous Father!" some answer would be vouchsafed, in her utter self-abandonment and helplessness. Nor was she altogether disappointed.

A gentle tap at the door, and the poor child sprang to her feet, as if ashamed to be caught upon her knees.

"Come in," she cried, in a very faint voice.

The rap was repeated, somewhat louder.

"Come in, if you please."

CHAPTER III.

THE door opened softly, and a smart English chambermaid presented herself.

"Well, Bessie?"

"Did you ring, m'em, please?"

"No—but—come in, Bessie, and shut the door," said Julia, as a sudden thought flashed into her mind like inspiration. "You may send Peter up, if you please."

The girl opened the door, and stood curtsying and simpering, and playing with the bows upon her apron, but did not offer to go.

"Well, Bessie?"

"I s'pose, m'em, you wouldn't mind my asking the porter, m'em, please, or one of the waiters, to send him up?"

"No, indeed; I had quite forgotten we were not in our own house. You will oblige me, though, by sending for him at once. Let him know that he is wanted *immediately*."

"Yes, m'em, but—"

"But what, Bessie?"

"Well, m'em, if you please, I'm rather afeard he can't be found just now. He knows you are all a-goin' to the hopera, and so he went off with the 'osses to give 'em their supper; he's a nice man, is Peter; he allers looks arter the cattle himself, m'em, please."

"Ah! I am glad to hear it, Bessie; you may send a porter for him."

The moment Bessie left her, poor Julia began pacing the room as before, stopping every few moments to listen, to compare her watch with the clock, without seeing either, or having the least idea of the time; or to look out of the window. It was growing dark, the lamps were lighted, and the street was crowded as she

had never seen it before. It seemed thronged with unshapely phantoms. The wind roared, the heavy casements rattled, the snow came down so fast, and so plentifully, that only a feeble glimmering of the gas lights could reach the middle of the street, and the huge, heavy omnibuses, lumbering and pitching through the darkness, and all white with snow, seemed a sort of shadowy phantasmagoria, overpeopled with apparitions, and plunging on their way with a perpetual roar, like the host of Pharaoh through a midnight sea.

"What! only half past four!" she cried, at last, as a clock sounded in the passage-way, and she was led to look at the watch in her hand; "only half past four! what a dreary, dismal day! I do hope Uncle George has not gone far, — not down to the river, certainly."

She shuddered, and her young heart stopped for a moment; and then she murmured, —

"O, Heavenly Father! what would become of me! But why give way to such dreadful apprehensions? No, no, — I will not; I must remember God's faithfulness, and the prayers of our dear mother; and — surely I heard a step!" — going to the door, — "no, no, — I was deceived by the beating of my own heart, I dare say; and yet, I almost felt a hand upon the lock outside. Who is it? Who's there? Arthur! is that you?" she cried, setting the door wide open, and looking out into the large empty hall. There was nobody, not even a waiter or chambermaid, to be seen; the ladies were dressing for dinner, and the gentlemen were but beginning to muster on the floor below.

"Well, well," she continued, retreating to her chamber as if pursued, "If I must go to the opera, I must. Uncle George would never ask me to go, but for a good reason; and I would'nt disappoint him for the world; though, as the children say, 'I would rather take a whipping;'" and then the poor girl sat down and cried as if heart-sick of all such dreary make-believe; and then, mustering all her strength, as if to while away the time, she added, wiping her eyes with a lace ruffle she had been working, "I am sure Arthur will not lose sight of him. Ah, if he knew all! but he knows enough, poor Arthur! to be frightened himself; but there's one comfort, I shall not be obliged to dress for dinner

though Uncle George *is* so very particular, and though I should be sorry to disappoint him, and wouldn't for the world appear to be less mindful of him — and Arthur — just because we dine by ourselves, than I should be of strangers at a public table, or in a private house."

A rap at the door.

"Come in!"

The door opened, and Bessie stood in the passage-way curtsying.

"Mr. Wilson's below, m'em."

"Mr. Wilson?"

"Yes, m'em, Mr. Peter Wilson."

"Oh, the coachman; send him up, if you please."

"All the ladies call him Mr. Wilson here, m'em."

"All the ladies?"

"The ladies' maids, m'em, and the chambermaids, and the waiters, and the ——"

"Well, Bessie, you have certainly got some remarkable notions in the little time you have been here."

"Thank you, m'em."

"Go, if you please, and send up the coachman."

"The coachman? yes, 'm."

Again the poor thing pulled out her watch and compared it with the clock, which had not moved since morning; and then she took up a ragged newspaper and tried to fix her mind upon that; and then, letting both hands fall into her lap, she began rocking slowly to and fro and wondering it was no later, and why one clock had stopped altogether, and why all the rest were too slow; as if they all were tired out, and weary of keeping step and time to no purpose, like stragglers on the march, trying to overtake the main body, yet always lagging a little way behind.

The door opened, and Mr. Wilson, the coachman, a short burly Englishman, with a pleasant look, a gold band upon his hat and a sort of badge upon his collar, stood in the doorway, bolt upright like a milestone.

"Ah, Peter, are the horses put up?"

"Yes, Missis."

"We shall be ready at seven."

"Yes, Missis."

"We are going to the opera!"

"To the hopera, — *at seven!*"

Julia recollected herself. The poor man was all aghast. "At the Queen's Theatre, Lunnun, was ever such a thing heard of, as for anybody what *was* anybody, goin' there much before nine or ten, where they had a box to themselves! To be sure the snobs in the pit, who are allers for havin' their money's worth, and get their tickets from the tradesmen, and want to see everything, and hear everything, sometimes go there in the middle o' the arternoon, just as they would to see a new piece, or a new hactor, at Drury Lane or the Little Haymarket, and crowd the doorway, and get their pockets emptied for their pains, jess for the sake of a rush when the door's open, though there's allers room enough at the hopera; while the West-enders, the real gentry, and all the decent people what keep their carriages, and know what's what, never think o' goin' till they have got through dinner, and only want to hear the last of a hopera." All which Peter thought over as he stood waiting for Missis, though he did not say it, and only ventured to look astonished, till he had found his way back to the servants' room, where Bessie and he talked it all over afresh, before the gaping Irish lasses and sneering mulattos, till they were found to agree in every particular about the "nasty Yankees," and their ignorance of what's what, and their uppishness.

"Did you see Mr. Pendleton, Peter, when he left the house?"

"Yes, 'm."

"Which way did he go?"

"Up that way, m'em," — pointing.

"Could you find him, think you?"

Mr. Wilson thought he could, and then again he thought he couldn't, as he remembered how long he had been gone, and how fast the snow was falling; "but he would try."

"Thank you, Peter. But stay; let me see."

"Yes, 'm."

"Well, Peter, if you should *happen* to meet him," she added, with a pleasant smile, that he might not see her anxiety, nor understand the cause, "you may tell him that I should like to go early, very early, if he has no objection."

"Yes, 'm."

"And then, too, — stop a moment, Peter. You might remind him of the hour. We dine to-day at half past five."

Another look of astonishment, as if he had never heard of anybody on earth dining at half past five, and Peter withdrew, and Julia began pacing the floor and looking out of the windows again, wondering at every turn how so large a quantity of snow could have managed to fall in so short a time; and then she pulled forward the little rocking-chair, and fell to stirring the fire, — as they do over sea, — wondering why there should be such a difference in the result. Here, the more she stirred it, the duller it grew, though the scorching heat continued, like that of molten metal, long after it has been poured into a mould and lost its brightness — poor thing! — while in England, Bessie used to light the fire with the poker, and sometimes, by laying the shovel and tongs a-top of the coal, or sprinkling it with cold water.

At last, having puzzled herself to no purpose, and being wholly unacquainted with the mysteries of anthracite, she rang for Bessie, to say that she was going to her room, and if anybody wanted her, she wished to be informed immediately.

But she had scarcely entered her own little quiet chamber, and begun to make some preparations for dinner, when a quick tap at the door set her heart hurrying with indefinable terror, so that when she withdrew the bolt, which she did with some difficulty, — her hand shook so, — and said "come in," she was startled at the sound of her own voice.

"Mr. Maynard is below, m'em," said Bessie, "and wants to see you immediately."

"Mr. Maynard! is he alone?"

"Yes, m'em, please."

Julia hurried down with a misgiving that almost overwhelmed her. She trembled, grew faint, and was obliged to lay her hand upon Bessie's shoulder, while she locked the door.

Mr. Maynard met her on the stairs.

"Julia, dear Julia!" said he, "don't be frightened."

"*Why!* Arthur! you're all covered with snow."

"Am I? — well, well, never mind. I shall be with you in five minutes," — giving himself a hearty shake, as a Newfoundland

dog might, on coming out of the water; "just run down into th parlor, will you?"

"You do not say a word about Uncle George. Have yo found him, Arthur?"

"No, can't say I have; but I know where he is, Julia. Don look so troubled, I pray you. I am on his track; and have onl left it for five minutes, to tell you that if we are not back by ha past five, you must not wait for us."

"Not wait for you, Arthur! As if I could sit down to a din ner by myself!"

"And I say, Julia, dear Julia," taking both her hands into hi "if we don't come back before you get through, you must not b unreasonable, — there, there, — go to dinner, will you, and try t eat something, — there's a dear girl!"

"Eat, Arthur!"

"Yes, Julia, eat, for it is well enough to do such things, no and then."

Julia saw through the kindly motive, and tried to smile, bu her eyes filled, and she hurried away to the parlor, with a chok ing sensation, which entirely overmastered her.

"Good-bye, Cousin Julia!" said Arthur, soon after this, com ing down stairs three steps at a time, with a shaggy outside coa buttoned up to his chin, a fur cap, and a heavy bludgeon, whic he tried to conceal behind him, as he stood in the doorway.

"Where's your umbrella?" asked Julia.

"Umbrella! in such a snow-storm! Why, Julia, you might a well try to carry a lamp. Good-bye, — cheer up, — I shall no be gone long."

"Arthur Maynard! — Arthur! come in for a moment, I pra you!"

Arthur entered.

"Shut the door, please."

"Why, what *is* the matter, Julia, you are pale as death."

"What is that club for, Arthur?"

"Club? O, yes, I didn't mean you should see it, Julia, you are so nervous, and so unlike yourself just now; but you know it is hardly safe these times to go abroad after dark, without being prepared."

"Prepared! — prepared for what, Cousin Arthur?"

"Oh, for these gentlemen who go about seeking whom they may devour, like him of old."

"Arthur! I do wish I could prevail upon you to ——"

"Well! Out with it! why don't you finish? I know you have got something for me."

"I am afraid to have you go abroad with such a weapon; you are so dreadfully quick and rash, you know, and certainly at this early hour of the evening, when the streets are thronged, there can be no danger."

"No danger, Julia!" exclaimed Arthur, somewhat nettled; and forgetting himself, and poor Julia too, in his anxiety to vindicate his manhood from all suspicion. "Why! when people are garroted at their own doors in the Fifth Avenue, and knocked down and robbed within half-pistol shot of the station-house, night after night, while the watchmen are abroad, no man, who values life a pin's fee, ought to go unarmed, along the outskirts or solitary squares of the city."

"Cousin Arthur, I am not much frightened, you see; but if you are going to such places, why not take somebody with you?"

"I intend to do so, Julia."

More and more astonished, Julia stood looking at him, in silence, till he sprang away with an air of uncommon cheerfulness, telling her he must go; that she *must* keep her courage up, whatever might be the nature of her apprehensions, — watching her countenance carefully, — and that he should not return without Uncle George, — dead or alive.

"Arthur Maynard! What *do* you mean?"

"God forgive me, Julia; I meant nothing at all; I only wanted to cheer you up, and get away without further explanation," said Arthur, appalled at her unearthly paleness.

"Without further explanation! What am I to understand by such language? What explanation is there needed? What is the dreadful mystery you are trying to conceal? you are, — you are, — I see it in your eyes, Arthur!"

"Julia, be patient, I have no dreadful mystery to communicate; I have only a vague apprehension; but Julia, dear Julia, unless you can command yourself, I dare not leave you, though I have no time to lose, not a moment, I fear," looking at his watch.

"Go, Arthur, go! I will command myself. Something has happened, I am sure, and you know it, and are afraid to tell me. You turn away your face, and I am keeping you here, when you ought to be, as you say, on the track; go this moment, I beseech you!"

"I dare not leave you alone, Julia, — touch the bell for Bessie, and I'm off, — there! I have done it for you, — good-bye."

The sound of hurrying feet was heard below, — Arthur stopped on his way, — Julia stood listening at the door, as they came up the broad stairway, and when Bessie, followed by Peter, with something in his outstretched hand, like a note, passed Arthur, and came directly toward her, she felt, in advance, that some dreadful mystery was about being cleared up, and her worst apprehensions verified. Clutching the door with one hand, she made a sign with the other for Arthur to take the note, and then staggering to the sofa, and covering her face with her hands, waited for him to speak.

After seeing that the entry was clear, and both servants within call, he shut the door, and begging her not to give way, promised to read the note for her, if she would only try to command herself.

"Read it, read it, Arthur!" she exclaimed, with a gesture of impatience; "why don't you read it?"

"I will, as soon as you can bear it," glancing hurriedly over the half dozen lines which were written with a pencil upon what appeared to be a fly-leaf, torn from a printed book.

"Arthur Maynard! I can bear anything but this; you will drive me distracted!"

By this time, Arthur had made himself sufficiently master of the contents to see that he had nothing to fear; and after assuring her that she would soon be ashamed and sorry for giving way to such preposterous terrors, — taking her hands from her face, and speaking cheerfully, — he read as follows: —

"Go to the opera, dear children, — go early, and be patient. I shall certainly be there, unless prevented by something serious, though I may not be with you at dinner, as I hoped, nor stay long at the opera. Don't be troubled; I am about my Father's business."

"Arthur!"

"Julia! what did I tell you?"

"But you do not know all, Cousin Arthur," she continued, lifting her eyes to Heaven, with tears of thankfulness; "if you did, perhaps, you would not so much wonder at my unreasonable anxiety, as you call it; nor at my nervousness."

"What on earth do you mean, Julia?"

"I mean just this,—but stop a moment, allow me to collect my thoughts. Perhaps before I say another word, I ought to know what *you* were so much troubled about, where you were going, and what you feared."

"Not now, dear Julia, for my own mind is not made up. With me it is all a sort of shadowy guesswork; but with you it must be otherwise, for I know your strength of mind, your unexaggerating truthfulness; and when you say to me, that if I knew all, I should not so much wonder at your unreasonable anxiety, or nervousness,—I take it for granted,—I know, indeed such is my faith in you, as if I had seen it with my own eyes, that something has happened to justify your apprehensions."

"Well, Cousin Arthur, I have not much to tell; and when I have told you all I know, and all I fear, I may not be able to give any good reasons for that fear. You may see things differently, and perhaps grieve at my childishness, or call it hallucination, arising from the sorrows I have had to bear, and the mysterious warnings we have had in our household, year after year, and you may even pity me."

"I do pity you, dear Julia."

"Thank you, Cousin Arthur; I love to be pitied, but I cannot bear to be laughed at."

"Laughed at, Julia!"

"You are always in such good health, you know."

"Well."

"And how could I hope to have you understand the feelings of a weak, wayward, silly thing like me?"

"Julia! Julia! I must know the meaning of this."

"My meaning, Arthur! Why, is it not clear enough? You are a man—a young man—rejoicing in the strength of man-

hood. I, but a feeble woman, cast, by the providence of our Heavenly Father, all at once upon the care of strangers."

"Of strangers, Julia!"

"Of comparative strangers. What knew I of Uncle George, or of Aunt Elizabeth, or even of you, till I was motherless and homeless, and almost helpless? When shadows fall about me — and to the strong man, substances are but shadows, while to the disheartened, and faint, and weary, shadows are substances — where shall I go for strength? Only to thee, my Father! Where look for sympathy? Only to those who, while they pity my weakness, and see my folly, are always ready to make the proper allowances for bad health."

"You cannot believe, dear Julia, — you do not believe, I am sure, that we fail to make such allowances for you."

"I did not know, Arthur, — I have had my fears, I acknowledge; but never till to-day have I been so much troubled, — I did not know but you and Uncle George might have misunderstood me; but," — wiping her eyes, — "no more of this. I am not the weak, helpless creature I sometimes appear, and the best way of showing it, perhaps, will be to communicate all I know, and something of what I fear, on account of Uncle George."

Arthur had been growing more and more serious, and more and more thoughful, and was now all ear.

"In a word, then, I am quite sure that something has happened, or that something is about to happen; something, I know not what, which weighs like the hand of death upon poor Uncle George; something from which there may be no escape; overwhelming, and I fear, in his judgment, inevitable. The shadow of impending calamity, like that of another world, is upon *our* path. I am sure of it; for if it only concerned himself, he is a strong man, and a Christian, and we all know what he is capable of enduring without a murmur; he would throw it off, and we should never hear a syllable of the matter, till it was all over, nor even then, perhaps."

Arthur nodded acquiescence, and Julia continued.

"You heard him say to-night, that he does not sleep very well. If he had acknowledged that he does not sleep at all, it would be nearer the truth, except when he falls asleep in his

chair, as he did to-night, with that great pile of letters before him; or sits looking steadfastly into the fire, till he loses himself for a few minutes."

"Indeed."

"Yes, Arthur, and I happen to know that long after we believe him to be abed and asleep, he is wandering about, and trying, first one chair and then another, — and we have managed to have two or three, of different size and shape, smuggled into his parlor within the last week or two; and, listen when I may, in the dead of the night, I hear footsteps in his room, and when he is not walking the floor, as you see him below, sometimes with his hands over his face, and sometimes clasped and lifted high up in the air, and sometimes with his arms folded over his chest, as if struggling with himself; his man tells me that he is constantly jumping up in a hurry, and going from the sofa to the bed, or from the bed to the sofa, and talking to himself, and that, when utterly exhausted and worn out, he loses himself for a few minutes, he never appears to sleep soundly, but is always restless and uneasy, and shifting about from side to side, or muttering to himself, or praying; and yet, so unwilling is he to trouble even poor Jerry, that he never calls him, nor allows him to be disturbed, in the night. You have seen him start up suddenly, perhaps, and go to the window or the piano, or begin stirring the fire, till he recollected himself, or had overmastered the first impulse, and then go back to his chair, and shut his eyes, and not speak perhaps for half an hour, in the vain hope of persuading us, or me rather, — for I see most of him in these moods, — that he is truly asleep."

"I have seen something of all this, dear Julia; but I never thought much of it, nor allowed it ever to trouble me."

"Because you are not with him so much, Arthur, and because, to say all in a word, you are not a woman."

Arthur smiled; but a tear came into his eyes.

"All make-believe, then, is it, Julia? even the cheerfulness we see?"

"All, Cousin Arthur, *all.*"

"And then, too, Jerry and Bessie both tell me, that go into his room when they will, they find him leaning back in a chair,

looking pale and weary, and pretending to be asleep; or sitting by that large table, with a pile of letters and old newspapers before him, lying there day after day, untouched; or leaning upon both elbows with his hands covering his face, just as you saw him to-night, as if trying to lose himself. And when he gets a letter, did you ever watch him? how his hand shakes, and how he trembles and turns pale, as if afraid to open it."

"Never! but how do you know that the papers you speak of are left lying there, day after day, untouched?"

"The chambermaid says so. When she dusts the room, she spreads a cloth over them, and has been charged, over and over again, to let them lie as they are, undusted and untouched."

At this moment there was a great bustle below, and the trampling of many feet, bearing a heavy burden up the broad stairway, with the dreary whispering and noiseless tread, which after nightfall are so much to be feared, coming nearer and nearer every moment, and stopping at last by the door, as if a crowd were in consultation.

"Julia! Julia! Merciful God! What ails her?" cried Arthur, as he saw her eyes fixed upon the slowly opening door, and her outstretched hands trembling, as if she saw spectres in the passage-way."

Arthur sprang to the door and shut it, and turned the key, without looking at the person whose hand was on the lock; but before he could reach the table and pour out some water, Julia, who had fallen back upon the lounge, with her arms hanging lifeleasly over the side, began to come to herself.

"No, no, don't call Bessie," said she. "I am better; thank you, — they didn't stop at the door; and I am *so* happy!" tears of joy and thankfulness filling her eyes, and her locked hands, half lifted in silent prayer, telling the whole story.

Arthur shuddered; for although the crowded trampling, and the heavy burden, and the subdued whispering did not stop long at their threshold, but went further on, it was by no means certain, though he was afraid to say so, or to betray any curiosity or uneasiness, that something dreadful had not happened.

"Yes, yes; much better now; thank you," she added, in

reply to a look of terror from Arthur, who went quietly to the door and unfastened it, while pretending to listen.

"Oh! if you knew all, Cousin Arthur! If you knew how much and how long I have suffered; the sleepless nights I have passed; if you had seen dear Uncle George as I have, when he had no idea that I was watching him, sitting hour after hour, with his eyes shut, or his face turned to the wall; now talking to himself, and now starting up suddenly and hurrying away to the window, before he recollected where he was, or that he was not alone; and then, after a short struggle, which I could see in his changing color, throwing himself upon the sofa at full length, and allowing me to arrange a chair for his feet, and to throw a shawl over him, and then, perhaps, before I could get back to my chair, springing up and looking wildly about, as if somebody had been trying to smother him; his chest heaving, and the cold perspiration standing upon his forehead, with a trembling about his mouth, and such a look of loneliness and sorrow, that your very heart would ache for him."

"All nervousness, or a disturbed condition of bodily health, I should say, Cousin Julia, were it any other living man; but with his character, and great bodily strength, and correspondent strength of mind, there must be something; it cannot be otherwise, Julia, there must be something very serious bearing upon him; shall I go to him, at once like a man, and ask him what it is, Julia? and whether we can be of use to him?"

"Not until we have weighed the question well, Arthur. He knows where to go for comfort, strength, and consolation."

"True, Julia, but ——"

"And when it comes to the worst, he knows where to look for sympathy below."

"Very true."

"We shall not fail him, Arthur Maynard, come what may. You will not, I am sure; and I think I can answer for myself."

"But you must watch him by the help of others, or you will break down, yourself. And you must not only give up the charge to others, who are stronger and in every way better prepared for such labor, but, instead of watching him, you must watch yourself, and not give way to these terrors, if you desire

to be of use to him; for he depends upon you, even more than you do upon him."

Julia shook her head mournfully.

"He does, indeed, Julia. I know it for a truth; and it may be that his concern for you" — keeping his eyes upon the door, and trembling with a secret fear, whenever a step was heard in the passage-way.

At last, finding Julia tranquillized, he reminded her of the hour, and begging her to be ready for dinner, — it was already six, — hurried away, determined to know the worst, and to overcome, by a walk through the blinding snow-storm, the terrible misgivings that haunted him, if he failed to satisfy himself by inquiry below.

In the hall, he met Bessie and Peter, and telling them to wait there, and allow nobody to see their mistress till he returned, was about ordering the dinner up, when something strange — almost fearful — in the expression of their countenances filled him with new terror; for the moment all were speechless.

"Oh, Sir, why didn't you allow me to go into the room! Why *did* you shut the door in my face, when poor Miss Julia wanted me so much?" sobbed the poor girl.

"Yes, Sir, and why not say a word to a poor fellow, — just a word of comfort, Sir, to keep his spirits up, instead of leaving us out here in the cold a whole hour," added Peter, with a whimper.

"And then, Sir, when they carried him up to his room, poor gentleman, — more like a dead body, than like a live man, — to think there was nobody about him but strangers, and poor Jerry; and when he asked for Arthur, Sir, callin' you his dear Arthur, and we told him you was with Miss Julia, he wouldn't allow us to go for you, but insisted on your having the dinner served, and tellin' Mr. Wilson there, how't he must have the carriage up at seven o'clock, and be ready for the hopera, without sayin' a word to Miss Julia."

"God forgive me! Not a word of all this to your mistress, for your life. Go below, Peter, and be out of the way till you are wanted. And as for you, Bessie, do you stay here, and don't allow anybody to see Miss Julia; but you may tell her, if she rings, that Uncle George has got back and gone to bed, not

feeling very well. Don't frighten her, and tell her nothing more, if you can help it, until I get back," springing up stairs, two or three steps at a time, and arriving all out of breath, in his vague terror and secret misgiving, at Mr. Pendleton's door.

After waiting till he had recovered himself, and was prepared in a measure for the worst, he tapped, — no answer, — he listened, — a low, whispering consultation followed, just within, as if somebody were reconnoitering through the keyhole, the door opened slowly, inch by inch, and first a pale hand with a lifted finger appeared, and then a strange face that startled him, and then, as he entered on tiptoe, the room appeared full of shadows, motionless and speechless in the subdued light, and there came a low, faint moaning from the bed, on the outside of which something like the body of a man, partly stripped, appeared to be lying, outstretched in the stillness of death.

By and by, among these many silent crowding shadows, two or three of which began to move, with a noiseless and very slow step, toward the foot of the bed, he was able to distinguish two policemen, with their badges, — a surgeon, with his assistant, carrying a bowl and a sponge, — a nurse, and poor Jerry, holding another bowl, and trembling from head to foot, so that his teeth chattered, and he was just ready to drop, when Arthur took the bowl and pointed to a chair, growing faint himself as he did so, for the surgeon shook his head and made a sign to the nurse to relieve him.

CHAPTER IV.

THE sound of hurrying to and fro through every part of the prodigious pile, the crowding and stamping of strangers tumbling through the broad passage-ways, and over the slippery marble, and shouting for the waiters to bear a-hand there, and brush off the snow, was beginning to die away; and the bustle about the door was yielding to a deathlike stillness, very soothing to poor Julia, who had just pulled out her watch once more, to be satisfied it hadn't stopped, when all at once there burst forth from below the sound of that "barbarian gong," which has been allowed to frighten strangers from their "propriety," without rebuke or denunciation, filling our largest houses with clamorous uproar, and shaking the very walls, year after year; like a steam-engine, with a menagerie aboard, running away, leap after leap, down an inclined plane, built of sheet brass; or plunging, with a full band of music, in full blast, through a railway station, crowded with puppy dogs and sucking pigs and tin-kettles, till it may be sometimes heard — the abominable thing! — not only in the largest hotels of our largest cities, but in many a sober little country village, where summer visitors go for quiet, a mouthful of fresh air, and a few days of comfortable nothingness, and in some of our dirtiest and shabbiest country-taverns, where people are obliged to stop over night, and all the boarders belong there, and grow grayheaded, in spooning their treacle out of the same dish, picking their teeth with a fork, perhaps, and eschewing butter-knives and private hair-brushes, to say nothing of tooth-brushes and soap, or the horse-trough they are fastened to; and in still shabbier farm-houses, with whitewashed walls, naked floors, broken windows and feather-beds, for the sweltering heat of a northern summer, along the

shores of the wilderness, or by the seaside, with their two or three families at most, for five or six weeks at a time, trying to persuade themselves that berries and milk, poor butter and worse bread, are trout-fishing; or salt pork and scorched cunners, with milk-chowder and apple-pie-root, are sea-bathing, &c., &c., &c.

And then, there was another tumultuous rush below, like that of the South Sea Islanders, hurrying to battle; with the sound of clapping doors from every part of the house, the rattling of keys, the rustling of silks, "voluminous and vast," low questioning voices, and hurried compliments, till poor Julia, who had never happened to be much in the way before, at feeding-time, either in a great American Hotel, or at Exeter 'Change, was half inclined to believe that a troop of horse, or at the very least, a mob of noisy school-boys, had been turned loose above, or that some part of the building was afire.

But as the clangor, and rush, and uproar died away in the passages below, and she stood hesitating, with her hand upon the lock, she heard footsteps hurrying swiftly up the stairway, followed by a bound, like that of a panther, at the top of the landing; then, two or three low words of inquiry, — the voices of Peter and Bessie in what seemed to be earnest expostulation with somebody else, — and then her own name was uttered in a subdued, though somewhat hasty and impatient tone, — and the next moment, the handle, upon which her hand rested, turned of itself, and the door opened, so that she caught a glimpse of Peter and Bessie struggling with a large man, all covered with snow, who pushed them both aside without speaking, entered suddenly, flung the door to, and turned the key.

"Julia, dear Julia!" said the stranger, catching her in his arms, just as she was ready to drop, — "don't be frightened! Speak to them, before they raise the house."

"Peter! Bessie!" screamed the poor girl, just as Peter flung himself against the door with all his weight, and poor Bessie had begun to cry help! murder! thieves! fire! not, however, so as to be heard below, but as if gasping for breath.

"Open the door, Julia, and speak to the fools! confound them both! or we shall have the whole neighborhood about our ears."

Julia tried to turn the handle.

"There! there!" said the stranger, wrenching the door open, as if he would tear it from the hinges, — "recollect yourself, and speak to them as if nothing had happened."

Julia looked out into the entry, and being afraid to trust her voice, lifted her hand, with what was intended for a smile, and whispered "hush! hush!" and instantly all was quiet.

"Bravely done, Julia! I have always said you were to be trusted in a matter of life and death, — I always knew you had it in you!" said the stranger, throwing off the shawl, and shaking the snow from his large flapped hat, all over the hearth-rug and carpet.

"Watch the door, Bessie, and let nobody in till I ring," she added, in a pleasant low voice.

"But if Mr. Maynard wants to see you, m'em?"

"Ask him to wait, please; and tell him I am engaged."

"Send up the dinner, m'em?"

"Charles, what say you? shall I order up the dinner?"

"Not for your life!"

"Wouldn't you like to see Cousin Arthur?"

He shook his head.

"Or Uncle George, perhaps?"

"Uncle George!"

"He is not very well to-day, and has gone up to his chamber; but I am sure he would be glad to see you, brother. What say you?"

"Ah! indeed! Gone up to his chamber, has he?" And then, after a moment of consideration, he added, "No, — *never*."

"*Never*, Charles?"

"Never — till I am able to look him in the face without winking."

Julia drew a long breath, and turned away.

"I have only a few minutes," he added, glancing at a half-open door, which led to the dressing-room. "Are we safe, Julia?"

"Safe, brother!"

"No spies about, hey? — No listeners? — no eavesdroppers?" going softly into the next room, and bolting the entry door, and turning the key, and then to the windows, one of which, over-

looking a low flat roof, he threw up; and then to the closets, and then to a large wardrobe.

"Brother, dear brother! in mercy, tell me what has happened."

"Hush, Julia, hush!"

"What *is* the meaning of all this? You are deadly pale and gloomy, and your eyes look as if you were hunted."

"I *am* hunted, Julia! The bloodhounds are on my track; and you have no hiding-place for me here;—but I have little time for explanation. You are a brave girl, Julia, when put to your mettle. I have no fears, no misgivings, on your account; but I would have you prepared—for you are soon to be taxed to the uttermost. All I ask of you now, dear, is to believe nothing to my disadvantage, whatever you may hear, till I stand before you, face to face, with my accusers. Come, come, Julia,—don't give way to your feelings. I have no time to lose, and my life may depend upon your self-command for five minutes."

"Your life, brother!"

"To the door instantly!—I hear a step!"

Julia sprang to the door, and listened, but the step went by; and she stood trembling from head to foot, pale and speechless, more troubled by the low earnest whispering of her brother, and by the noiseless tread, than by the abrupt entrance, or the look of gloomy determination about his eyes.

"Julia! sister!" said he, as the poor child threw herself sobbing into his arms,—"be of good cheer. Believe me, and bear up,—I am more than a match for the whole of them, yet!"—straining her to his heart with convulsive strength, and kissing her on the mouth, and eyes, and forehead, till the tears ran down her pale cheeks like summer rain, while even his lashes were wet, and his chin quivered,—"I have only run up to bid you good-bye, Julia, before I go;"—managing as he spoke to gather up the heavy shawl about him, and to disengage a travelling cap from the flapped hat he had entered the room with.

"To bid me good-bye, brother, before you go,—*where*? What *do* you mean? What *has* happened?"

"I cannot tell you, dear. We have no time now,—it would be foolish to enter upon such a long story here,—kiss me,—and then—and then, good-bye!"

"And you will not tell me? Oh, brother! brother!"

"You will know it soon enough, — too soon, perhaps, — but, Julia, my beloved sister! there is one thing I will say. You have always been faithful to me, — always loved me, — and always tried to overlook my waywardness, my headlong temper, and my wretched forgetfulness of what I owe to you and to myself, — to the memory of our mother, and to the example of our father; for which I pray God to bless you!"

"Do you mean what you say, brother?"

"*Julia!*"

"Well, then, if you do," — lifting her head from his broad chest, and looking up into his eyes, — "if you do, dear Charles, kneel down with me, this moment — here — *here* — on this very spot, — and let us ask our heavenly Father to forgive us, and watch over, and comfort and strengthen us!" And she drew her unhappy brother to her side, and they knelt together, — and while he buried his face in the sofa cushions, and his whole frame shook with the agony of ungovernable emotion, and his very breathing was frightful, a low, distant, broken-hearted murmur went up from his side, till they rose together, and she whispered, "Oh, my dear brother, God comfort and help you!"

"Good-bye, Julia, — my own blessed sister, — good-bye! *farewell!*"

There was something so dreary, so mournful, and so hopeless, in that last word, *farewell*, that poor Julia again lifted her head from her brother's bosom, and looked into his large clear eyes for explanation.

He understood her; and turning away from her with a feeling of deep sorrow and shame, and as he afterwards acknowledged, of overwhelming self-reproach, he added, "I know not whither to go, — I have no settled purpose, — I only know that you will never see me again — I hope and believe — until I am worthy of my dead father, of my poor broken-hearted mother, and of your unchangeable, unselfish love, my angel sister!"

"Oh, Charles! Charles!"

"Am I to understand by that cry, Julia, that you have no hope?"

"No hope, Charles! Oh, my dear brother, if you but knew the strength of my hope! If you could but feel as I do!"

The poor fellow shook his head — a tear fell upon her uplifted face, and the strong man was like a helpless child.

"But for my hope in you, my brother, — but for my trust in God, — but for my belief in prayer, — I could not live, I should not desire to live another day!"

"Thank you, my dear sister. God is faithful, I know, — or, at any rate, although I may not know it as you do, thus much I believe; and so long as you and mother continued to hope against hope, I was never without hope for myself, — never altogether disheartened. Continue to hope, dear Julia; continue to pray, whatever may become of me; and if I live, you shall be proud of your brother even yet."

"And if you should not live, dear brother?"

He shuddered — turned away — and then, holding her off at arm's length, and looking her in the face with a sad, mournful expression, he added, — "I understand you, Julia; I feel what you say. I am not, I hope, unthankful, nor altogether" —— (hesitating) —— "what I try to appear; and if all Christians were like you and mother, and like our generous kind-hearted father, so serene, so patient, and so hopeful, happen what may, under all the disappointments and sorrows of life, — always remembering, and always at the right time, too, how much they always have to be thankful for, and how much better off they always are than most of their neighbors, I do almost persuade myself — God forgive me! — that I might hope to be a Christian myself before I die;" — another kiss — "but when I see so many sad countenances among people who pretend to be so happy, and who try to make us believe that they are perfectly satisfied with their heavenly Father, and with his administration of the Universe, — as they certainly are with themselves, — you need not shake your head, Julia, for you know they look upon themselves as God's children, and all the rest of the world as reprobates and outcasts, — while they go through life weeping, and groaning, and fasting, to be seen of men; — upon my word, Julia, I have no patience with them, and I long to say to them, 'What do ye more than others?'"

"And if this were all true, dear brother, would it change the administration you speak of, or in any way affect our duties, or lessen our accountability?"

"Perhaps not, I am only complaining of what you call the church, the people of God; upon my life, sister, I do believe that inasmuch as all who are not helpers are hinderers, they are now the greatest hindrance in the way of unbelievers. They are continually disappointing us, and betraying themselves. The world has, after all, a higher standard for the christian character than Christians themselves appear to have; that is — bear with me for a moment, my dear sister; I have thought more of these things than I have had credit for; and I say, in all seriousness, that we, the world, expect more of the professed follower of Christ than his brethren do. They overlook what we do not, and cannot, from the moment our friends have encamped apart, saying by their behavior, if not by their words, to each of the forsaken, — 'Stand thou aside, we are holier than thou!'"

"I cannot argue with you, dear brother; I am no match for you ——"

"Pooh, pooh, child! you are a match for me at chess, and beat me, on the whole, oftener than I do you — or did, when we used to play together so much, night after night, and month after month, at our own beloved home; though I dare say I have learned something since — and — and ——" faltering and hesitating, as if he had forgotten all he wanted to say, — "and, — ah, I remember now; if you can do this, why should you not be a match for me in argument? No, no, my dear sister, you wrong yourself."

Julia laid her trembling hand upon his arm, and looking up with her eyes brimful, and her mouth trembling, she added, —

"No, no, Charles, I cannot argue with you; I would not if I could; I am afraid to trust myself with controversy, — I can only feel; and I now say again, that if all you have said were true, — and much of it is untrue, I am sure, because I find the oldest and best Christians least satisfied with themselves, — it would only prove, not that unbelievers are right, but that professors are wrong."

"Very fair, — check!"

"And is it not well that so much is expected of us by the world? They watch for our halting; and I dare say you find people about you who are constantly doing, without reproach,

and without remorse or shame, what, if a reputed Christian or a church member were to do, would bring the whole town about his ears."

"Bravo, Julia! but why don't you cry 'check?'"

"At any rate, brother, — do be serious, I pray, — you will acknowledge that, generally speaking, it does not make a man worse to join the church."

"Generally speaking, I should say no; though if he should become a hypocrite, or a knave, or grow unforgiving, uncharitable, and self-righteous, it would undoubtedly be the worse for him, and for the church too, hereafter."

"Undoubtedly. And you will admit, I dare say, that joining the church does not diminish his chances for happiness hereafter, generally speaking?"

"Upon my word, Julia, I hardly know what to say; I do not much like the position I occupy just now, — my thoughts are wandering; I, myself, am elsewhere; and to be check-mated in three or four hurried moves, you know, is a fool's mate, which never happened to me but once, I believe, and that was in my boyhood; so, if I do not stomach it now, my dear little preacher, you must not wholly give me up."

"Give you up, Charles! Never!"

"Well, then, just oblige me by saying as much to the brethren and sisters ——"

"Charles!"

"And among the rest, to Uncle George."

"Uncle George loves you, brother."

"Loves me?"

"Yes, brother, and would almost lay down his life for you."

"And so he walks by me in the street without seeing me; sets a watch upon me; and when I grow desperate, withholds from me what I most need, the encouragement and countenance of a straightforward honest man, who has been familiar with my temptations, and trials, and sorrows, and wanderings, from my youth up. O, if these godly men were not so unforgiving, so unrelenting, so unhopeful!"

"Never mind them, dear brother. If they are sometimes mistaken, as I think they often are, I would have you remember the

words of our Saviour himself, — 'What is that to thee? follow thou me!'"

"Even so, dear Julia. He was always gentle and loving, — or if not always, as where He was moved to anger, and rebuked the pharisees and the hypocrites, and overturned the tables of the money-changers, and drove them out of the temple with a scourge, as with a whip of scorpions, — always ready to forgive, and to say to them that had no hope, 'Go and sin no more,' or, 'Go in peace; thy sins are forgiven thee!'"

"Dear brother!" murmured Julia, lifting her locked hands, with streaming eyes, and a heart overflowing with thankfulness, toward the Hearer of prayer.

"And then, too, look at his teaching. If we fast, we are not to appear to men to fast; we are to anoint our heads, and to go forth rejoicing about our Father's business, and not as the hypocrites do, with sad countenances; and if we pray, we are not to go into the market-places, nor stand at the corners of the streets; but we are to go *into our closets, and shut the door.* Think of that! And so, too, if we give alms, we are to do it so secretly that our right hand shall not know what our left hand doeth; and we are to forgive our brother seventy times seven in a day if need be, and he only says 'I repent'; and instead of stoning a poor creature to death for gathering sticks on the Sabbath day, he tells us, he himself a Jew, that the Sabbath was made for man, and not man for the Sabbath; and better than all, perhaps, that they love most who have been forgiven most."

"O, my dear brother! knowing so much, if you but knew a little more!"

"The tree of knowledge, sister Julia, has never, from the first, been the tree of life."

"Brother!"

"Well!"

"One word more, 'Be not faithless, but believing.'"

Charles looked at her, as if to satisfy himself that he understood her, then made a motion to pull out his watch, glancing first at the clock, and then at the door, — and then a sort of angry flash passed over his forehead, as he felt Julia's eye following his movements, and he added, with some degree of embarrassment, —

"In a single word, sister, of one thing I am sure, — if these people who constitute the church, and who claim to be God's people, or the saints on earth, are Christians, then Jesus Christ himself was not a Christian."

"Brother Charles!"

"For, how unlike they are!" continued he. "But enough, — I am beside myself; I hardly know what I am saying, dear; I have overstaid my time; — is that clock right? Confound it, no! I did not look at the hour-hand; give me the time, Julia, please;" fumbling again for his watch, and then stepping softly to the door and listening, — "all safe, — good-bye."

Julia drew out her watch and offered it to him; but after glancing at the face, he pushed it away, and was again about to turn the handle of the door, when she threw her arms about his neck, and sobbing as if her poor heart would break, she whispered, — "Take it, brother, dear brother, take it; you have no watch, I see, and you are going away, among strangers, nobody knows where. You have not forgotten your promise to mother, I hope?"

"What promise, Julia? I have broken all but one, — God forgive me!"

"The promise you made her upon her death-bed."

"The last I ever made her, Julia?"

"To read a chapter in the Bible every day; one chapter at least, if possible, and to offer one prayer at least every day of your life, whatever else you might do, or not do."

"That promise I have kept most faithfully."

"God bless you, my brother."

"And her last words I never shall forget, Julia."

"What were they, pray?"

"The very words you have just repeated, — *Be not faithless, but believing.* And now once more, good-bye, Julia."

"And must you go? And will you not tell me where?"

"No, Julia; for I do not myself know. All I do know, and all I can say for your comfort now, is, that I am going where I can build up a character for myself without the help of others; where I shall not be checked, and watched, and thwarted, and waylaid at every turn, by my best friends; where, if I choose to

look in at the opera, or theatre, I shall not find my path beset by spies, — hang them! — but they have got the lesson they wanted, to-night, I'm thinking! — and where, do what I may, and go where I may, I shall not always feel like a prisoner at large, or as if out on bail, at the very best; but," — looking more gloomy than ever, — "the lesson they have had may teach them what they most need to know — the fools! — that whatever else I may be, or not be, I am my own master, and will not be hampered, and worried, and badgered in this way, even by the few that I most love; nor by the fewer still that love me; I will die first! No, no, Julia, keep your watch; I shall not need a watch after to-day."

"Take it, brother! It will remind you not only of me, but of mother, and of her last words, and — and — forgive me, dear Charles, you are dreadfully agitated, I see, — I do not ask what has happened, nor what you are afraid of, but, — in mercy, brother, take the watch, for I ——"

She stopped suddenly, overcome by the savage earnestness of his look, as he stood listening at the door, stooping low, with one hand upon the lock, and the other thrust into his bosom. There was a sound of low, fitful whispering just outside the door, as of hurried question and answer. He grew paler, and making a sign to Julia, glanced at the open window of the dressing-room.

"What is it, brother?"

"Hush — hush! — not a word for your life," said he, lifting himself proudly up, and stepping back a little way, and watching the door, as if waiting for it to be forced open.

But, after a few moments, the whispering died away, and all was still again — still as the chamber of death. Then, turning to Julia, he said, — "Yes, Julia, on further consideration I will borrow your watch, for I may need it, — my life may depend upon it for a while."

"Your life, brother!"

"Even so, Julia;" and as he stooped to give her another farewell kiss, another yet, and yet another, she drew a diamond ring from her finger, and slipping it into a little net purse, murmured — "Oh, if I had but known of this before; I might have been a help to you, dear brother; but — but take it, take it! I

pray you, if you wouldn't break my heart, — and I shall be better prepared when I next hear from you."

"You will not hear from me for a long while, dearest," — putting her hand back with great gentleness.

"They are only keepsakes, dear brother," — coaxingly, and with tears in her eyes, — "and you may be among strangers, and they may help to remind you of dear mother, and father, and perhaps of a ——"

He had just turned the lock very softly, and was opening the door inch by inch, making a sign for Julia to look out, and reconnoitre, while she, taking advantage of the opportunity, dropped the purse into a large outside pocket of his coat, just as he drew the flapped hat over his eyes, and gathered the shawl about him, so as to conceal the dress underneath, and leave both arms free.

"Stop!" she whispered, catching his arm, and casting a hurried glance along the passage-way, — "stop a moment! I hear footsteps! They are coming this way, — hush!"

The warning was too late. He had opened the door, and was leaning forward, when she caught a glimpse of two strangers — policemen, by their badges — who were coming through the passage-way, arm in arm, and keeping step, like young soldiers after parade, tramp, tramp, tramp. On seeing Charles, they started, stopped short, interchanged a nod and a whisper, and came forward with a careless air, and looking another way, but with the evident purpose of cutting off his retreat.

Whereupon Charles moved toward them as if about to speak, and while re-arranging the shawl, turned suddenly upon the nearest, and pushing him headlong upon his fellow, threw himself over the top railing of the stairs, upon the first landing, and before they recollected themselves, or uttered a cry, he had mingled with the crowd below and vanished! vanished — as if the earth had opened and swallowed him up alive!

The two policemen sprang after him in full cry, — not over the balustrades, but down the broad stairway, followed by Peter Wilson, and Bessie, and half a score of Irish servants, all shouting together, "Stop thief! stop thief! murder! murder! fire! fire!" but all to no purpose. Not a vestige was to be found, —

nobody had seen the large man with a shawl and a flapped hat, both of which were afterwards found in a part of the landing, which they had overlooked in their hurry, though Peter had a sort of confused notion that the chap, as he called him, underwent some change on his way down stairs, while Bessie maintained to the last that he would be found up stairs under the beds, or hid away in some closet; and two or three of the startled by-standers below, and one of the waiters, concurred in declaring that, "just before the outcry which set them all agape, a tall, handsome, wild-looking young man, bareheaded, in a large overcoat, with hair flying loose, had come down the broad stairway in somewhat of a hurry, dashed through the crowd of strangers like a wild beast, and instantly disappeared, like a shadow;" while the newsboys and hackney-coachmen about the door, through which he must have escaped on his way out into the blinding snow-storm, agreed together in saying that no such person had passed that way; no large man, wearing a shawl and a flapped hat; no tall man, bareheaded, with hair flying loose, though most of them well remembered a gentlemanly looking fellow wearing a cap and overcoat, pushing them aside, right and left, as the uproar in the office called their attention that way; but they were quite sure he could not be the person, because, in the first place he wore a cap, and in the next place, he did not hurry, after he reached the side-walk, where two other policemen were stationed, but crossed the street, which was never more crowded, while they were watching the doors and looking up at the windows, and was instantly lost among the crowd of omnibuses, carriages, and drays, and foot passengers feeling their way through the uncomfortable darkness and the dizzy uproar, inch by inch, and shouting to one another as if they were lost in a fog on the North River, when it was breaking up, and they were all drifting out to sea.

Poor Julia! When she saw her brother upset the two policemen — she never knew how — and fling himself head foremost, as it seemed to her, over the balustrade, she covered her face with her hands, uttered a faint scream, and staggered away to a chair, leaving the door wide open, while the cry of murder! fire! and stop thief! rang through the vaulted passages

and multiplied antechambers of the St. Nicholas, like another onset of South Sea Islanders.

But as the tumult died away, and just as she was beginning to lose all consciousness, Arthur appeared, followed by Bessie and Peter, who would not believe their own eyes, when they found their beloved young mistress alive and safe, and able to answer their questions.

"Would she have dinner served? the waiters had been up two or three times to see."

Julia shook her head; but instantly recollecting Arthur and Uncle George, and being aware of the inferences, if she lost her self-command for a moment, she added, "certainly; by all means, and the sooner the better, now."

"Shall we have the carriage at the door, m'em?" said Peter, — managing as he spoke to get a peep into the dressing-room, where the open window and the snow on the carpet appeared to trouble him exceedingly, for he pursed up his mouth, and fell to rubbing his chin very slowly, without being able to satisfy himself.

"The carriage, Peter! Oh! — ah! — I had entirely forgotten the opera! Didn't you tell him, Bessie, that we had given up the idea?"

"Lauk, m'em! how should I know that you had given up the idee?" said Bessie, glancing at a large wardrobe.

"Very true. I have been so occupied ——. Well, well, — never mind now. You may put up the horses, Peter; we shall not want the carriage to-night."

"Bless you, m'em! they was put up long ago. I never takes 'em out in sich weather tell the last minute, m'em."

"Thank you, Peter."

Peter bowed and withdrew; interchanging a nod with Bessie, however, on her way out, and winking, first at the open window, and then at a large closet, the door of which stood a little way open, as if he understood the whole affair; though in his heart he was wondering what on earth had really happened to Missis, and who that strange-looking chap might be, — comin' and goin' when he liked, an' without so much as saying, by your leave; and what on earth had become of him; stopping, on his way

out, and looking over his shoulder at Bessie, while he reasoned with himself, and thought how cleverly he had floored the two policemen, and cleared his way through the crowd like a thunderbolt.

"Bessie, child, let me have a cup of tea and a biscuit, please. I have a terrible headache, and no appetite; and you may run up to Uncle George, and see if he would like to join us, will you? We are not much later than his regular dinner-hour, abroad, I see."

"If you please, Julia," said Cousin Arthur, somewhat nervously, "I will run up to Uncle George, if you say so, — though I think he had better not be disturbed. He was just falling asleep when I left him."

"Asleep, Arthur! Has he gone to bed?"

"Yes; and he begged me to say to you, that you mustn't be troubled, and that he hoped to see you to-morrow."

"Hoped to see me to-morrow!" said Julia, starting up from the chair and looking into Arthur's eyes for further explanation. "What is the meaning of this? — tell him, I pray you, or shall I send Bessie? — tell him I ——"

"Tell him what, Julia?"

"Tell him I must see him to-night, — I *must!*"

"Allow me to run up first, and see if he is awake; for to tell you the truth, dear Julia, though quite unwell from an accident which happened to him this evening — not two hours ago — all he wants now is a good night's rest. I shall be with him, and so will Jerry."

Julia stood still, watching his countenance, and trembling all over, and listening to every word, with hands clasped and parted lips.

"If he can get a few hours of undisturbed, refreshing sleep, say the surgeons, — doctors, I mean, — which he has long needed, you know, we shall have a — a — I hope," — in a low, faltering voice, — "little or nothing to fear."

"Little or nothing to fear! Surgeons! doctors! an accident! Oh, Arthur, Arthur! in mercy tell me what has happened!"

"I cannot tell you," said he, turning away his head. "He desires you to know nothing of what has happened till to-morrow."

"What dreadful mystery is this, Arthur?"

"Julia, dear Julia, command yourself. This long day of trial, and sorrow, and perpetual agitation, may be too much for your strength; and as there is no immediate danger, and he begs you not to see him till to-morrow, I am sure you will not refuse."

"You are right, Cousin Arthur, I will command myself; I will try to persuade myself that you are acting wisely, and that he —— Oh, my dear uncle! What would my poor mother say if she were alive now! and what will your mother say, when she gets here, and finds that her only brother had been left to the care of strangers?"

"Of strangers, Julia?"

"Oh, I do not mean you, Cousin Arthur; but you are a man, and poor uncle has been always accustomed to the gentle ministering of woman."

"We have a nurse, Julia."

"A nurse! Merciful Father! a nurse and surgeons! and I am not allowed to see him, nor to know what has happened! O, Cousin Arthur! what shall I do! what *shall* I do!" sobbing as if her heart would break.

Arthur could bear this no longer. "Stop, Cousin Julia," said he; "wait a moment, and I will run up and ask if you may not be allowed to have at least a word with him, for I see you are getting unreasonable, and there is no saying what you may take it into your head to believe."

"Oh, bless you, bless you! Cousin Arthur."

"But Julia, dear, promise me that you will not have any talk with him, nor ask him any questions, if you find him sleepy — or thoughtful."

"Only a word or two, a good-night kiss, dear Arthur, and I shall be satisfied till he wants me; and then — I tell you now, Arthur, and I wish you to understand me — I will not be supplanted by any hired nurse, — I will not be driven away, nor coaxed away, nor frightened away."

"With all my heart, Julia;" and along the passage, and up the stairs he went, with a light, swift step, to the door above. There he saw the nurse and Jerry; and having arranged with

her that no questions were to be asked, if Uncle George was either asleep or sleepy, he looked into the room and saw that no tokens were left of the surgeon's doings, and that, although very pale, and to all appearance in a sweet sleep, notwithstanding a sort of shadow upon his large forehead, which came and went with his labored breathing, and the slight twitching of the eyelids, and about the mouth at times, the patient was not likely to alarm her, after all that had happened, he returned to the parlor below.

Meanwhile the dinner had been served; but nobody knew of it.

"Come, Julia, come, he appears to be sound asleep," said Arthur; "but as the sight may soothe and tranquillize you, I think you had better go up at once, — but prepare yourself, I pray you; and if we find him asleep, we had better not stay, perhaps, beyond a minute or two."

Julia looked at Arthur, and saw that he was troubled; and then taking his arm, they went away together.

She found her uncle asleep; and after looking at him a moment, she fell upon her knees at the bedside, full of deep thankfulness and solemn joy to find him no worse, after all the frightful fancies that had tormented her,—not much worse in appearance, and though very pale, not *so* pale as she had pictured him to herself.

As she rose to go, the slight rustling of her dress, or something which only the sick man could hear, disturbed him, and he opened his eyes.

"Ah, Julia! are you here?" said he, with a faint smile.

The poor child could not speak; but she leaned over the bed and kissed him, and a tear fell upon his cheek.

"You are a naughty thing, Julia Parry, — and when I get up I shall have a serious talk with you."

"Hush, hush, Uncle George."

"Right, my love; but I sent word to you not to see me till tomorrow; and I now say to you good-night, go to bed early, and be of good cheer. There is nothing very serious, I hope, and believe, in my case; but much will depend upon your behavior, Julia. If you are patient, and hopeful, and reasonable, you may

depend upon being my nurse, in all that you are capable of. There, there, — good-night! God bless you."

"Good-night, Uncle George."

"Are you satisfied?" said Arthur, as soon as they had got back and were seated at the table.

"Perfectly."

"Well, then, let me see that you are determined to obey Uncle George; — a spoonful of soup would do you no harm."

Julia shook her head.

"Or a taste of this black-fish?"

Julia turned away with an expression almost of loathing, and took up the tea, while Arthur made believe at the soup, and then at the fish, and then at a roast fowl; but after two or three vain attempts to persuade her, and to satisfy himself with appearances, he threw himself back in the chair, with a declaration that, after all, a late terrapin lunch was a very bad preparation for dinner.

And there they sat; Julia with a cup of tea in her hand, looking into the fire, and he with a glass of pale sherry, which he tasted from time to time, while urging her to try a drop of the rough old port, selected by Uncle George himself in Oporto.

Nothing was said, till the table was cleared, and the entry clock sounded once more.

"Can it be possible," said Julia. "Only nine o'clock? What a tiresome, endless day!"

Another dead silence.

"Julia!"

"Cousin Arthur!"

"I do not ask what has happened to you; but I take it for granted, from what I have heard, that your brother has been here."

"Do not ask me, I pray you."

"Poor Charles! I wish I had known it! I would give the world to see him. But —— good-night, Julia; I must run up to Uncle George."

"Thank you; — but if I should be wanted?" — looking rather anxious, though trying to smile.

"No danger of your being wanted, Julia; but if you should, I

will send the nurse for you. Go to bed, therefore, at once,—and go to sleep; and let me advise you to lie as long as you can to-morrow; and not allow Bessie to disturb you, for you may have to be a prisoner all day in a sick-chamber."

"I hope so, Arthur. Good-night."

CHAPTER V.

THE long, long night of storm and darkness that followed, will never be forgotten by the shipmasters and sailors along our coast, nor by the poor, shivering, houseless wretches, that were huddled into all the crowded alleys, and garrets, and cellars of New York. Thousands of little children, half naked and starving, were packed away by families, and left with chattering teeth and blue lips, and staring, sleepless eyes, for the dreadful storm to abate; while their wretched mothers, and still more wretched sisters, were prowling the streets, and watching the crowded oyster-saloons and eating-houses, — or lingering about the doorways of the Astor House, the St. Nicholas, the La Farge, or the Clarendon; or wandering through by and forbidden ways, toward the Fifth Avenue, where they would stand looking at the lighted windows, by the half-hour, stamping their feet and rubbing their hands the while, very much as if they felt something of the warmth they saw, — and were comforted in their nakedness and helplessness, instead of being exasperated or embittered; for they were of the great unreasoning, though not unfeeling multitude, perhaps, who had been fed and clothed and sheltered, year after year, — and had their little ones, even the least of their little ones, watched over and provided for by the wise and thoughtful tenderness, and not by the calculating ostentation of what are called the world's people; many of whom lived in the largest houses, fared sumptuously every day, wore purple and fine linen, — and, if you please, wasted their substance in riotous living; and yet had never failed them, never disappointed them till now, — *now;* when they most needed help; and the city itself was no longer safe, and thousands of desperate men were congregating, day after day, in the parks, to hear speeches, more

to be dreaded than the blast of a trumpet in the dead of night, or the clangor of charging horsemen through a besieged city, — husbands, brothers, fathers and sons, all waiting for the word, and only hindered from tumultuous outbreak, or from firing the city perhaps, by the strength of the newly organized police, — the well known character of the gentleman at their head — for he *was* a gentleman — and every way fitted, by his calm, resolute bearing, and gentle firmness, for the situation he occupied, as commander-in-chief, or superintendent. "Move on! move on!" was to be heard in the midst of every little stoppage or gathering, by night or by day, whether in the thronged or empty streets; and everywhere, at the corners and crossings of the principal thoroughfares, along Broadway and Wall Street, and up the Bowery, and about the doors of the churches and theatres, and the Exchange, and the auction marts, and the picture-galleries, and in the courts of justice, and in the neighborhood of the filthiest, the most forbidding and least crowded, though narrow passage-ways, and courts, and alleys, leading to the Five Points, and the wharves, or slips, — the glitter of a policeman's badge, as he walked slowly by a lamp-post, would often reassure, and sometimes astonish you, in the dead stillness of night, go whithersoever you would, in your unappeasable desire to see for yourself; and perhaps fill you with the uncomfortable sense of being watched and followed yourself, under suspicious circumstances, by something ubiquitous. And then, too, the steady tramp of an organized body, small, but efficient, heard through the darkness of a midnight storm, like the startling challenge of a sentry at your elbow, — "*Who goes there?*" as you wander about within the walls of a beleaguered town, — followed by the minute-gun dialogue of a long-established usage, — "*A friend!*" — "*Advance, friend, and give the countersign;*" or, "*Rounds!*" — "*What rounds?*" — "*Grand rounds!*" — "*Advance, grand rounds, and give the countersign!*" — till you stop, and catch your breath, and wonder when it will finish — and when you will be at liberty to *move on*, and how you came to be so completely surrounded, without knowing it, while abroad on your own business, meaning no mischief, and feeling perfectly satisfied with yourself.

Many of these huge piles — to go back a few steps into the

Fifth Avenue — were dark, absolutely dark and silent, like the house of death, or at least of mourning; while others were dimly lighted, with no sign of stirring life and cheerfulness within, but looking as if all overshadowed with a sense of approaching calamity, — and about the door-way, of here and there one, all blazing with light and ringing with music, policemen were stationed and carriages drawn up, — and scores of little ragged children were huddled together on the opposite side of the way, and watching the windows, and shouting and screaming at every change of the phantasmagoria within, of dancing men and women, whirling about like mad, with petticoats in the air, notwithstanding the terrible storm outside; some of the raggedest and noisiest waltzing and polking for themselves, at every change of the music, to the infinite annoyance of all the well-bred foot-passengers and police, and to the unspeakable delight of the private carriages, and all the hackney-coachmen in livery.

The sick man slept well, but woke unrefreshed, at a very early hour, and grew more and more feverish and restless, till the gas being wholly turned off in the room, where Jerry slept with his clothes on, hour after hour, under pretence of watching; and the little night-taper having disappeared with the nurse, the cold, blue light of a winter's morning entered the room, through the parted curtains, like a spirit, and overspread the ceiling, upon which the calm, thoughtful eyes of the sufferer were fixed, while his lips moved in silent prayer, and his locked hands, which lay on the outside of the quilt, were occasionally lifted in patient thankfulness, till he began to breathe more freely, and to look about him, as if trying to recall what had happened.

Up to a late hour, he had been a little wandering, or light-headed, and when he fell asleep at last, though he slept soundly, there was now and then a troubled expression — a sort of shadow — wholly unlike anything Arthur had ever seen before, upon his forehead and about his mouth, as if the mind were still at work, and he was only counterfeiting sleep.

Arthur took charge of the patient, after sending off the nurse, with a promise to call her if she should be wanted, and sat the whole night through, watching the remarkable countenance before him, and occasionally listening, whenever the shadow appeared,

for a correspondent change in the breathing. At best, it was but a troubled sleep, and young as he was, he had been somewhat familiar with the duties of a sick-chamber; and the perfect stillness within and without, after Jerry and the nurse had been got rid of, enabled him to judge, as loving women do, not so much by the reasoning of others, nor by experience, where the heart is engaged, as by something better — something more inward — more satisfying — a sort of holy, steadfast, unquenchable instinct, which will not bear to be reasoned with.

At first, when Arthur wanted the nurse to leave her patient in his charge, the poor woman smiled, — when he persisted, she shook her head, went away to the table, and began bustling about, very much to the annoyance of Arthur, as if she were in the wardroom of a large public hospital, — what! a mere boy, at best only a sort of a girlish, delicate looking, fashionable young man, — poh, poh! she wouldn't hear a word of it! but when she saw the patient looking at Arthur, as if he understood it all, and showing neither surprise nor unwillingness, there was a slight change in the expression of her good motherly countenance, and she relented so far, as to say that toward morning, about five, or six, or half past six, if the patient slept well and everything went right, she shouldn't mind giving up the charge for awhile; but soon after this, on seeing the boy lay his watch on the table, — draw the curtains at the foot of the bed, — place the night-taper so that he could see the hour, without moving, — gather up all the noisy, rattling newspapers and fresh-looking journals, and new books, that lay here and there about the chamber, and put them away; leaving only a ragged pamphlet or two, the rustle of which had long since died out; carefully reading over the written directions, and comparing them with the labels on the bottles and the numbers on the little papers, — arranging the tumblers and wineglasses and teaspoons all within reach, and in a certain order, and actually tasting of the gruel and tea that were standing on the hearth, — she began to have her misgivings, to grow uneasy, and to watch every movement with her eyes, while pretending to be very busy about clearing up; and at last when she saw the poor boy wandering about on tiptoe in a flowered dressing-gown, and embroidered slippers, with his

collar open, and rich hair flowing loose, and a velvet cap, with a gold tassel and spattered with seed pearl, tilted over one ear,—she glanced at his dainty feet, and very delicate hands, with a feeling of dismay, and stood watching him narrowly, and muttering to herself; wondering what he would do next, till he threw himself into a large easy-chair, and stretching his legs over the back of another, signified to her, in a quiet way, that she was at liberty to go about her business, and the sooner the better.

"Oh!" said poor Martha, and the expression of her face instantly changed for the better; and she began to breathe more freely, and with one more glance at the bed, and a pleasant smile, she disappeared long before the earliest hour she had first mentioned.

And so the night wore away; dreary and silent within, while the roaring of the storm without, and the clattering of the windows, and the bellowing of the chimney-flues, and the crashing of chimney-pots on the neighboring roofs and side-walks, were enough to keep the whole neighborhood awake.

Arthur lost himself once or twice, but never missed the appointed hour, when a powder was to be given, if the patient was awake; nor did he once fail to see the look or gesture when a drop of tea, or lemonade, or gruel was wanted to wet the lips of Uncle George, who dropped away into that sound, and on the whole, perhaps, refreshing, though somewhat troubled sleep, soon after midnight, while Arthur was standing over the bed with a teacup in his hand, afraid to move, afraid to breathe, lest he might disturb the sleepiness he saw gathering about the shut eyelids and relaxed mouth, like a soft evening shadow in midsummer.

Long before the usual breakfast hour, the nurse came back to relieve Arthur, and stir up Jerry, and "set things to rights." A hurried glance at the bed, at the table and hearth, and easy-chair, and then at the large clear eyes of the sleepless boy, who had been watching through a long, dreary, winter's night with all a woman's gentleness, and faithfulness, unselfish and uncomplaining to the last, completely satisfied her, that, although she had not been troubled, and nothing had gone amiss to her knowledge, the boy was only a boy after all, so far as she could

see, and though she could not well get over the dainty slippered feet, and girlish hands, nor the full, open throat, until she saw the pencilling of a mustache upon his lip, and the fine shadowing of an imperial, both of which had been overlooked by gas-light in her trepidation and hurry, she could not help smiling upon him in a motherly way, and feeling perfectly satisfied with herself and with him, on the whole.

Just as Arthur was leaving the room, Bessie appeared with the morning papers, which Miss Julia had sent up to him. She had not slept well, but wanted to see him as soon as he could be spared, and begged to know when she might be allowed to speak with Uncle George.

Arthur consulted with the nurse, and it was agreed between them, as the patient looked drowsy, and might fall away into another sleep if he were left undisturbed, with the window darkened, and nobody there but the nurse, that Julia should be sent for when he awoke.

While Arthur was debating with himself in the passage-way, whether he should venture upon a cold bath after such a long sleepless night, Peter stole up to him with a mysterious look, and putting into his hands two other fresh-looking, though grievously tumbled morning papers, which he had carried under his coat-tail on the way up, whispered, — "May be 'twould be better for Miss Julia" — hesitating and winking at every other word — "not to come in the way of any on 'em yet, and perhaps, if Mr. Arthur agreed with him, yesterday's papers would be jest about as well for Betty Gray, and her missis, too, as they didn't often look 'em through very carefully."

Arthur Maynard shrunk from further questioning, but he understood, as well as if he had seen the papers, that there was something for Julia not to see.

"Thank you, Peter," said he, glancing, as he spoke, at the unopened, untumbled copies he had brought away with him, he hardly knew why, with a feeling of secret joy. Thus far, they were safe, whatever the papers might contain; it was clear that, by sending them up to him, thus early, and thus untumbled, Julia had not looked into them herself, and with a little good management perhaps, might find as much pleasure, and probably

more, if yesterday's papers were substituted for these, in a quiet way, and left about on the drawing-room sofa. She never wasted much time in that way; but how were they to manage with Bessie, who always had a ragged pamphlet, or an old newspaper in hand, while waiting outside, or when left altogether to herself? Not that she ever read to others aloud, nor that she always held the pamphlet or book right end up; but then she made-believe, with such a serious air, that Julia, who knew that she could not read writing, and that she made very laughable mistakes when sent of errands, had not the heart to question her, while Peter, who was a sturdy believer in Betty's accomplishments, and took everything for granted, was fixed upon guarding all the approaches, and running no sort of risk whatever.

They understood one another at once, therefore; and while Arthur hurried off to his chamber, full of misgivings, and unacknowledged fear, Peter went to work, changing all the papers he could lay his hands on, smoothing them out, until they looked as good as new, and punching a hole here and there with a toothpick, or scratching the date with his nail, or gently rubbing a few letters or figures, till they looked newspaperish and smutty, — as if he well understood the business of obliteration and substitution.

No sooner had Arthur got back into his little warm snug chamber, than forgetting his cold bath, and everything else, indeed, but the newspapers he had brought with him, he flung himself into a chair by the window, tore aside the curtains, and opened the first that came to hand.

At the very first glance, instantaneously, as by a secret fascination, his eye lighted on the following paragraph: —

"MYSTERIOUS.

"In the midst of the terrible snow-storm last evening, a descent was made upon a fashionable gaming-establishment by a small body of police, led by a detective, and by a gentleman, a stranger from abroad, whose name we were unable to get. Pistol shots were interchanged, two of the police were hurt, and the stranger was thrown with great violence upon the side-walk, by a desperate fellow, said to be his son, leaping out of a window upon him; but whether intentionally or otherwise, could not be ascer-

tained, for the street lamps were of little or no use, and he escaped in the darkness."

Here then was a key to a part of the dread mystery; but in hurrying over the casualties, another startling paragraph arrested his attention: —

"HOTEL THIEVES.

"We are fast getting a European reputation. House-breaking, murders, and street-robbery at our own doors, and within call of the police-stations, at all hours, after the lamps are lighted, and sometimes in broad daylight, are growing to be very common among us, — fair business transactions. What we are to do with a long winter before us, if such things are allowed to continue in our midst, it would be well to inquire. We must have a mounted patrol; our police must be doubled; the city garrisoned, if need be; and martial law proclaimed. Better such things, than the outrages we are getting so familiar with.

"One of the boldest, and, on the whole, perhaps one of the sauciest, and cleverest, and most successful enterprises of the season, took place last evening at the St. Nicholas, while the boarders were at dinner. A fine-looking fellow, in a rather outlandish garb, forced his way into the private parlor of a young lady at this hotel, — in spite of the resistance and outcries of two servants, — obliged the young lady to open the door and order them to be quiet, as if he were an old acquaintance, if nothing more; remained with her about half an hour, during which a good deal of whispering and sobbing were heard, as the servants afterwards remembered; and then our gentleman walked off with the lady's jewels and purse, opening the door himself and stepping out as quietly, and as much at his ease — the impudent scoundrel! — as if he belonged there; and then, too, which after all is the best of the joke perhaps, on coming plump against a small body of police, who happened to be on duty in the house that evening, and were on their way through the hall, not having heard a syllable of the uproar, — the lady being afraid to cry out or alarm the house, it would seem, or perhaps prevented by the wretch, — instead of surrendering, he tumbled the policemen head over heels, right and left, piled them up three deep, sprang over the

balustrade, landed in the midst of the crowd below, and was gone like a flash! We understand the lady was very beautiful, and very young. We do not choose to give her name; but unless our contemporaries are very discreet, — which we hardly expect, — of course it will be out this evening."

Nor was even this all. Another paragraph soon caught his eye, in a part of the paper he had overlooked, which he could not help connecting, he hardly knew wherefore, with the momentous transactions of the evening: —

"WHAT ARE WE COMING TO?

"Not a day goes by without something new and terrible in the shape of crime. People are robbed at their own doors, and sometimes in open daylight, — half-strangled at the very entrance of the opera-house, and dragged into a corner, without being missed. Even at the Academy of Music, and at the crowded prayer-meetings, there is no safety. Ladies have their watches, and purses, and chains snatched from them, while they are walking in Broadway, with policemen at their elbows. Just such a case happened yesterday in Chambers Street, near Burton's; and last evening a gentleman was attacked from behind, near the corner of University Place and Fourteenth Street, by two well-dressed thieves, and but for his great presence of mind, and uncommon bodily strength, he would have been garroted. As it was, one of the rascals managed to rob him of a purse and a valuable diamond ring, which he was imprudent enough to carry in the outside pocket of his overcoat; although he knocked one of them head over heels 'into the middle of next week,' and took the other by the throat with such a tremendous gripe, that when the watch came up, the fellow was black in the face, and speechless. We hope the gentleman who has done such good service, though a stranger, and about to go abroad immediately, as we hear, will not refuse to prosecute, as many do, because of the trouble or delay. Would that we had more of such 'ugly customers' among us, they would soon put a stop to these abominable outrages."

Here was a complication! What a chapter of mystery and terror. And supposing the other paragraphs to contain just as much truth as the first, relating to hotel thieves, and no more,

what was to be done? what was to be believed? and how were they to be answered? If an attempt should be made to disabuse the editor about the supposed robbery at the St. Nicholas, what would become of Charles? What of Julia? Monstrous and provoking as the whole story might be, how was it to be contradicted, without going into particulars both distressing and alarming?

Again he took up the untumbled papers, to satisfy himself that they had not been opened; and the better to guard against any possibility of their coming to the knowledge of Julia, he determined not to lose sight of her, till the danger was over.

Having reached this conclusion, he locked them all up, dressed, and hurried down below, just in time to receive a second message from Julia, who insisted on seeing Uncle George.

"What say you, Sir? Shall we admit her?" inquired Arthur, going up to the bed, and stooping over the patient, and whispering just loud enough to be understood.

Uncle George nodded, smiled, and turning his eyes toward the door waited for it to open, without speaking.

But Julia was below, and Arthur was very thankful; for he greatly desired to see her first; to understand, if possible, by her looks, what had happened to her; and to be well prepared for the momentous interview, without questioning Uncle George, who was too weak for conversation.

He found her very pale, but calm and self-possessed. Her eyes were dark with trouble and sorrow, and there was a trembling about her mouth, not to be mistaken. Poor child! Arthur saw at a glance that she had passed another sleepless night.

He took her hand in silence, drew it underneath his arm, and without speaking, led her up the stairway into the chamber, and seated her in the chair he had placed for her at the pillow of the sick man, who reached forth his hand with a pleasant, though sickly smile, and let it fall upon the quilt, so helplessly, and so unlike himself, that the tears came into her eyes, and she turned away with a shudder, even while stooping to kiss the high pale forehead, and the next moment tottered back into a chair and covered her face with her hands.

Arthur sprang to her side, astonished and alarmed at the sudden change of her countenance; but just as the nurse appeared

with a bottle of hartshorn, he caught a glimpse of what poor Julia must have seen while stooping to kiss her uncle, — two or three spots of blood on the pillow, which had been overlooked by the nurse, and by Arthur himself, notwithstanding his great anxiety, owing to the position of the patient's head and his thick abundant hair.

"You had better not stay now, Julia," whispered Uncle George, "I feel sleepy, and am doing very well; — go down with her, my boy, and stay with her. Don't leave her, I charge you; — not a word, my love! You shall be sent for, if you are wanted; and the moment I am able to see you, dear child, you shall know it. Arthur," — making a sign for him to come nearer — "persuade her to lie down awhile on the sofa. She has not slept, I see, and I know very well she cannot sleep in the daytime; but rest will refresh her, and as your mother will be here to-morrow, or next day at furthest ——"

"My mother!" exclaimed Arthur.

"Aunt Elizabeth!" said Julia, interchanging a look of alarm with Arthur, and then with the nurse.

"Even so, dear children. She had prepared a pleasant surprise for you; but under the circumstances, I think you had better be told the truth."

"Thanks be to God!" whispered Arthur to Julia, as she lifted up her trembling hands, with a faint cry, toward her Heavenly Father.

"There! there! go now, go! — not another word," murmured Uncle George, trying to waive his hand to them as he spoke, and then turning his face to the wall, not with a despairing cry, but in hope and trust, believing that the shadow of death had gone back on the dial-plate, and asking no other assurance than that which he had obtained through silent midnight prayer, when all the rest of the world were asleep.

"Is it not very strange, Arthur," said Julia, when they had got back to the parlor, "that your mother should be so near just at the time she will be most wanted? Oh, how glad I shall be to see her!"

"Indeed!"

"Yes, Arthur, indeed! I acknowledge that I have always

been a little afraid of her, and sometimes almost afraid to see her; but then ——"

"Afraid of my mother, Julia? the gentlest of human beings! the most lovable, the readiest to overlook and forgive!"

"Do not misunderstand me, dear Arthur. I have not wholly forgotten her, I assure you; from our earliest childhood we have been taught to look up to Aunt Elizabeth as the highest type of womanhood, — as absolutely faultless."

"God forgive your teachers, Julia! my mother would not, I am sure, notwithstanding her readiness to overlook and forgive. And though you are almost afraid to meet her, I will answer for it, that when you do see her, now that you are old enough to understand her, you will fall in love with her; not because of her being absolutely faultless, but because of her being altogether a woman, and loved all the more, it may be, because of her faults, — for faults, of course, she must have; although, between ourselves, dear Julia, I do not know what they are, nor does poor Uncle George, I fancy."

Julia smiled through her tears.

"I did not look for her till the spring opened, or, at least, until the house was ready; did you?"

"I hardly know what to say. When I heard she was going to Philadelphia, before she settled down here, it occurred to me more than once, that however much in the way might be her dislike of hotel accommodations, it would be no easy matter for her to keep away, month after month, while we were getting the house ready for her."

At this moment the door opened, and Bessie appeared with two cards in her hand.

"Not at home, Bessie," said Arthur, in a very impatient tone. "What on earth can people be thinking of, to send their cards up at such an hour?"

"You forget, Cousin Arthur," said Julia, reaching her hand for the cards. "Probably some friend in the house may have heard of the accident. I wonder if it is in the papers," — looking about, as if to find the morning paper.

"Quite possible," said Arthur, just as his eye fell upon the top card.

"Why, bless me! Talmadge! — Talmadge! why, that is the gentleman we saw yesterday," said Julia; "an old friend of Uncle George's, you know. And here is something written on the back; what is it, Arthur? read it."

Arthur glanced over the writing; and then said, carelessly, though he found it no easy matter to conceal the misgiving that followed, as he called to mind that Mr. F. A. Talmadge was General Talmadge, and that General Talmadge, once the Recorder, was now Superintendent of Police, — "He would like to see Major Pendleton at his earliest leisure, on important business, for five minutes."

"You had better see him yourself, Arthur. Of course Uncle George cannot," said Julia, without a sign of trouble or alarm; "but —— ah!" looking at the other card, "whom have we here?"

Arthur took the card. It was that of a celebrated surgeon, though it bore, as in England, the title of *Mr.* only. "Show the Doctor up," said he, turning to Bessie, "and I will see the other gentleman."

"Up here, Sir?"

"No, no! up to Mr. Pendleton's room. Nobody is to be admitted here — nobody!"

"Nobody!" added Julia, except the General; "you may ask him in here, Bessie; I will be back whenever you want me."

The conversation that followed between Arthur and General Talmadge was very brief, but exceedingly to the purpose. On hearing that Major Pendleton was too ill to see anybody — for the General persisted in calling the sick man Major, notwithstanding two or three broad hints, and a wry face or two — he promised to call again; for he thought the Major's evidence would be wanted on the trial of the desperate scoundrels the police had entrapped the night before.

Arthur caught his breath — but very soon saw that no suspicion was entertained of poor Charles, whatever else might be the object of the visit.

Fixing his eyes at last on Arthur's, with an expression that showed he was coming to the point, and was not to be baffled or delayed, the General drew from his breast-pocket a tum-

bled newspaper, and pointing to the paragraph headed "Hotel Thieves," asked him how much of that was true.

"Very little, indeed, I assure you, Sir," said Arthur, beginning to feel nervous, but answering, nevertheless, with perfect composure. "I was not here at the time, myself; but no robbery was committed, I am sure."

"Can I see the young lady? I am told she is under the guardianship of her uncle, Major Pendleton."

"Certainly, Sir, if you think it necessary; but she is not well; she has had a sleepless night, and we have thought it best, as we have reason to believe my mother will be here to-morrow, or next day, at furthest, that she should be left undisturbed till then."

The Superintendent fixed his eagle eye upon Arthur once more, and his countenance gradually relaxed from a settled seriousness, almost a judicial sternness, into a benevolent, and rather encouraging smile, as he pursued the investigation.

"Did you see the young lady last night?"

"I did."

"How long after the alleged robbery and escape?"

"Instantly, — within two minutes, I should think, for the uproar below brought me down from my chamber."

"Did she complain of being robbed, or of any violence?"

Arthur smiled; but before he had time to answer, it was clear that the Superintendent had anticipated the answer.

"Oh! ah!" smiling in reply. "No robbery — no unwelcome violence — no screaming — hey?"

"Nothing of the kind, Sir."

"Confound these newspaper stories! And how is the young lady this morning? Have you seen her?"

"Yes, we have been up together to see Mr. Pendleton; but she is far from being well ——"

"I understand. My compliments to her. 'A lovely creature,' they say here," — showing the newspaper.

"You can judge for yourself, Sir, — she's the young lady you rescued yesterday."

"Indeed! She's an angel, Mr. Maynard."

"Thank you, Sir! Shall I report your testimony?"

"With all my heart, — and say that I hope for a better acquaintance."

Another long pause, and another searching look followed; and then, taking Arthur aside to the nearest window, where he could see every change of countenance, while questioning him further, he proceeded, —

"I must be frank with you, my young friend. I have no doubt in the world that family secrets are involved in a part of these transactions, and so far as I can do so, consistently with my official position, I shall spare you; but there is another mystery here, which I desire to get to the bottom of, — and I have an idea that you can help me."

"With all my heart, Sir, if I can."

"You did not see the gentleman yourself?"

"What gentleman?"

"The gentleman, who, on leaving your private parlor last evening, while the boarders were at dinner, came suddenly upon two of my men, who had been up with the Major, and before they had time to recollect themselves, pushed them aside, sprang over the balustrade, and escaped."

"No, Sir, I did not see him."

"Have you reason to believe that you know him?"

"Yes, I know him well, beyond all question."

"So far so good; is he a gentleman?"

"Sir!"

"Excuse me, but I must be plain with you. I do not ask who he is, nor what; I only desire to know if he has the look and bearing of a gentleman. You see what the papers say; and my fellows tell the same story; but, although I have entire confidence in their honesty, I would rather have your judgment, founded on personal knowledge, than their opinion, made up, as it must have been, from a hurried glance under the excitement of surprise."

"I assure you, General, that the person who was here last evening to see my Cousin Julia ——"

"Your cousin, hey?"

Arthur bowed, and continued, "is what you yourself would acknowledge for a gentleman. To say all in a word, he is a remarkably handsome, well-bred, well-educated, warm-hearted fellow, though somewhat wild, fiery, adventurous, and headstrong."

"I see, I see!—a perfect gentleman."

Arthur bowed again.

"Upon this point, then, I am perfectly satisfied: your portraiture corresponds with the original, so far as I can judge."

Arthur began to grow uneasy. "With the original?" said he; "I do not understand you, Sir."

"I have just left him."

"Left him! Where?"

"At my own house."

"At your own house, my dear Sir! can I see him there?"

"Not there, unless we make an appointment with him. Allow me to ask, now, if you have ever seen this ring—a diamond, I believe?"

Arthur turned pale.

"Or this?" handing Arthur a little net purse. "Take your time, and satisfy yourself, I beg, before you answer. Much may depend upon your testimony."

"My testimony, Sir?" faltered poor Arthur, as he recalled the newspaper account of the hotel thief, and the robbery; and not only recognized the diamond ring, and the purse, but found Julia's initials wrought into the meshes with gold beads. A short, brief struggle—a paroxysm—a sensation of dryness in the throat, and then a little faintness followed; but after a few moments, he determined, come what might of the affair, to conceal nothing, and, as if adjured by the magistrate, in the name of the living God, to tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, so far as he should be questioned; although he began to fear what he trembled even to think of.

"Yes, I have seen the ring before," said he. "It is a diamond; I know it well,—I cannot be mistaken,"—breathing more freely, and looking up with a well-counterfeited expression of cheerful confidence, and very much as if he did not see the drift of the terrible questioning, he repeated,—"Yes, I know it well. It belonged to that gentleman's mother."

"Has he ever worn it, to your knowledge?"

"Never, to my knowledge."

"Who has worn it, since the death of his mother?"

"Ah," thought poor Arthur, "how much more he knows than

I had any idea of; and what a mercy it is that I did not question Julia more narrowly!"

"So far as I know, it has always been worn by the young gentlewoman herself."

"While in mourning for her mother?"

"Even so; for it was put upon her finger by that dying mother, as a sort of talisman, I believe, connected in some way with her own marriage, and with many sorrows of her past life."

"A ring, therefore, which the young lady would not have been likely to part with, under any ordinary circumstances?"

Arthur stood aghast. What had he done? What said? For a moment, he felt as if he had been giving sentence of death upon poor Charles. Oh, that he had been allowed to prepare Julia! And yet, of what avail were any preparation? The truth must be told; and, if the wretched young man had in some way been tempted to take the ring and the purse, without her knowledge, under some desperate emergency, there would seem to be no hope; nothing could save him, for he knew Julia too well, to suppose that she would either prevaricate, or qualify, or withhold the simple truth, whatever might be the consequences, even to a beloved brother. And then, too, as he felt the eyes of the Superintendent watching the changes of his countenance, while waiting for the answer to his last question,—as the darkness of discouragement and fear grew thicker, a new and more terrible thought flashed through his mind, with overpowering distinctness. If Julia had always worn that ring, as he believed, through all her sorrow and mourning, how could it have been taken from her without her knowledge? Was it in fact a robbery, then, as alleged in that vile, provoking newspaper? Was there—could it be possible—that there was any degree of rudeness or violence? And the outcries that were so suddenly hushed—what did they signify? He grew more and more perplexed, as he thought of Julia's behavior and appearance, when he first entered the room, and saw her sitting back in the large easy-chair, dreadfully agitated, with her hands over her face, tears trickling through her fingers, and pale as death.

"No, Sir," he answered, after another despairing, though inward struggle, and with great apparent calmness; "No, Sir, I am

quite sure that she never would have parted with it, under any ordinary circumstances."

The Superintendent nodded, and grew more serious, and more thoughtful.

"But you say nothing of the purse?" he added. "Have you ever seen that before?"

"In for a penny, in for a pound!" thought poor Arthur, growing desperate under the examination of the ex-Recorder. But he answered, nevertheless, and with all the directness of a well prepared, honest witness, under oath.

"I know that purse well, Sir. It belongs to the young gentlewoman herself."

"The owner of the ring?"

"Yes, Sir."

"Allow me to ask when you saw it last in her possession."

"Which?—the purse, or the ring?"

"The purse."

"I saw it in her possession yesterday."

"At what hour, if you please?"

"About four, I should think; or between three and four."

"How are you able to fix the hour?"

"We had agreed upon going to the opera; and while arranging for an early dinner, we compared watches, and Miss Julia had occasion to send a servant, with a piece of gold to be changed, a Bank of England note having just been returned to her; and I saw the purse on the table."

"Miss Julia, you say? And if I understood you just now, the very young lady I saw with you at the corner of Broadway and Chambers Street; you called her Julia, I remember."

"The same, Sir."

"A most beautiful creature, to be sure."

Arthur bowed, and smiled at the renewed enthusiasm of the ex-Recorder.

"My compliments to her, and hope she did not suffer from the distressing and very troublesome affair of the morning."

"A little nervous, nothing more, I believe; though, as I have mentioned before, she had a sleepless night, after the disturbance that followed."

"Did she go to the opera?"

"No; the storm was too violent."

"Was the young lady out of the house, to your knowledge, after you saw the purse in her possession?"

"No, Sir, certainly not. She would not go unattended at so late an hour, even if the weather had permitted."

"In the carriage, perhaps?"

"No, I am quite sure; but —— we will send for the chambermaid, if you please?"

The Superintendent nodded.

But before he could touch the bell, Bessie, who had been growing very impatient, burst into the room, as if she had been listening at the door, without waiting to be summoned or questioned, and expressed her overwhelming astonishment that his worship should think it possible for such a delicate young lady as Miss Julia, to go out in a carriage by herself, in a snow-storm, after dark.

The ex-Recorder smiled. "The question, if you please, young woman, which I was about asking ——"

Bessie bridled up.

"The question, my dear, is ——"

Bessie simpered and curtsied.

"The question is, whether your mistress was abroad anywhere yesterday after four o'clock?"

"Yes, your reverence."

"Do you say yes?" looking hard at Arthur.

"No, your worship."

"Yes! — No! What am I to understand by such answers?"

Another curtsy, with signs of embarrassment, which began to trouble poor Arthur.

"Understand the question, if you please; take your time, and answer directly."

"Yes, your honor."

"Was your mistress, the young lady you call Miss Julia, out of the St. Nicholas, after four o'clock last evening, to your knowledge?"

"Mercy on us, no! not for a single moment! How could she, your worship? Mr. Arthur was gone; Mr. Pendleton was gone; and there was nobody here but Peter, and Jerry, and me, and ——"

"There, there, that will do. Did she visit any of the boarders, or go into the large parlors below?"

"She never visits nobody, Miss Julia don't, your worship; and — I should like to catch her in one o' them public parlors; I don't believe she ever so much as peeped into 'em all the time we have been here."

"Do you know that purse?"

"To be sure I do, your honor."

"Whose is it?"

"Miss Julia's, your worship."

"When did you see her have it last?"

"She always carries it; never saw her without it since we left England."

"Do you recollect seeing it after three o'clock, yesterday?"

"Yes, your worship; while the ladies was here she wanted to go a-shoppin' with, she sent Peter to change a twenty pound Bank of England note, and the barkeeper wouldn't touch it, your honor, but sent word back it was good for nothin', for the bank had failed; — the Bank of England failed! How the ladies did laugh, to be sure! and Mr. Arthur and the Major! and so she sent 'em a Yankee gold piece, — he, he, he!"

"And then you saw the purse? Do you know what she did with it?"

"I saw it on the table — that table you see there — when I came to ask if she would have dinner sent up."

"What time was that?"

"I should think about half-past five, or six."

"Well, well, that will do; you may go now."

"Thank your reverence."

"And now, for the ring;" continued the ex-Recorder, turning to Arthur. "When did you see it last in the possession of the young lady?"

"I think I remember seeing it when she held out the gold piece for the servant. I sat by her side; the light flashed upon the ring; I am quite sure it was while her hand was stretched over the table near me."

"Enough; I am satisfied."

Arthur looked up in dismay. There was a something so sud-

den and peremptory in these few words, given out as the substance of the whole examination, that he hardly knew which way to look.

"You will oblige me by taking the purse and ring up to the lady, and asking her, in the most delicate way possible, how they were lost? and when, and where? Try to ascertain if she had any other visitor, except the gentleman we have been speaking of, yesterday, after four o'clock. Do you know if she has looked into the morning papers?"

"I am sure she has not; I have taken charge of them all."

"So much the better. You need not say anything about robbery, or violence, nor allude in any way to the hotel thief, you know."

"Thank you, Sir," faltered poor Arthur; a ray of hope, faint and afar off, beginning to break upon him, in spite of his forebodings.

"I will stay here," said the Superintendent, as he threw himself back on the sofa, and pulled out his watch. "Be as quick as you can, I pray you; for I have not breakfasted yet, and may have to invite you to breakfast with your friend."

"Me, Sir! — with my friend?"

The Superintendent smiled encouragingly; and Arthur started off with his heart in his mouth, notwithstanding a show of hopefulness and trust.

In about five minutes he came back with the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth.

"Thank God!" said the Recorder. "The mystery is now explained. It was for a time too strange for belief. The gentleman, — I do not give his name, for up to this hour I do not know it; he refused to give it to the officer, and would not enter into recognizance to appear."

"Recognizance to appear!"

"O, as a witness, my young friend, nothing more; don't be alarmed. Where we are afraid the witness may be tampered with, or frightened off the track, or got rid of, no matter how, we require of him to enter into a recognizance to appear and prosecute."

"O, I understand."

"But the gentleman refused to give his name, and appeared so uneasy, while they were searching the two street ruffians he had so handsomely dealt with, that some little suspicion was excited, and they sent for me at a most unreasonable hour, when I could not possibly attend; but I went early this morning, and was not a little astonished at the story they told me.

"It seems that on thoroughly searching the two captured thieves, a purse with a diamond ring, half a dozen American gold pieces, and two or three Bank of England notes, were found concealed about the person of the individual who had been throttled and captured by your friend; this the ruffian acknowledged at last he had taken from an outside pocket of the gentleman just before they grappled. But the strangest part of the whole story was, that your friend refused to own the purse and the ring, or that he had been robbed at all, though he acknowledged to me, privately, that he well knew the owner of both, and much wanted to know how, when, and where they had come into the possession of this wretch, for he had seen the purse, without opening it, in the hands of the owner not half an hour before he was attacked by these garroters. Do you wonder that we were puzzled? or that, when I saw the morning papers, there seemed to be at least a possibility that your St. Nicholas had been visited by a thief, as well as by a gentleman? I see it all now; it is all perfectly clear; and as your friend is very anxious to be off early to-day, no matter why, and we have ample evidence for the conviction of the two thieves, without his help, I think it best, on the whole, to let him go, without insisting on a recognizance. Good morning, Sir, — as we shall always know where to find him, — good morning."

Arthur knew not what to say, and therefore said nothing.

"Meanwhile, if you please, I'll thank you for the purse and ring."

"Certainly, Sir; for my friend, I suppose?"

"No, for the trial."

"I hope, my dear Sir, that you will be so obliging as to take charge of them yourself. The ring is a family relic."

"No, no, that would never do; but they will be in the custody of the law, and perfectly safe, till they are wanted for the trial."

"And then?"

"Then, with the purse and the money, it will be returned to the right owner. Good morning. My compliments to the Major. We must look into his affair, after he gets over the shock."

"The shock?"

"Ah, indeed! here is another mystery, of which I dare say you have no just idea; but we have got all the gentlemen safe, and shall go about that business at our leisure."

"All, Sir?"

"Yes, all; or at any rate all but one, I believe; a desperate fellow, I see by the paper here, who jumped out of a window in the second or third story, upon the shoulders of his own father. But I have not received the report of that case yet, and have only the newspaper account for my guidance. What say you to a cup of coffee at the lunch below?"

"Thank you, my dear Sir; but I have promised Uncle George, and my poor Cousin Julia, not to be out of the way for a moment."

"All right; and if I should happen to see your friend,—no matter for his name, if he chooses to be kept out of the newspapers that is none of our business,—what shall I say to him for you?"

"Say to him, for me? O, say to him, if you please, that"—hesitating—"that he has not an hour to lose; that the sooner he is about the business he undertook last night, the better; and—say to him, Sir,—God bless the poor fellow!"

And Arthur's voice trembled, and if he had been altogether alone, he would have wept, and perhaps he might have sobbed; so unexpected and so sudden was the relief that had been vouchsafed to him, just when there seemed to be no possibility of escape for poor Charles, or poor Julia.

"Good morning, Sir."

"Good morning, General."

CHAPTER VI.

NEARLY two months after these transactions, about which a cloud of mystery still hung, though gleams of light appeared now and then, at long intervals, to gladden the hearts of the mourners and sufferers, Arthur and Julia met in the hall one morning, on their way to a very late breakfast.

"One moment, if you please, dear Julia," said he; "I have been trying to see you by yourself, without being observed or questioned by Uncle George, or mother; and if you will take charge of this little box, which I have had in my possession ever since I returned to the city, we will go into the breakfast-room before they come down, and there we may have at least a few minutes together."

Julia trembled. "What! more mystery, Cousin Arthur!" said she, taking the little box, and stepping before him into their private parlor, where breakfast had been waiting a whole hour, and where they had the room to themselves.

"Even so, Julia; and so it must continue, while we shrink from all reference to the past, and lock up our sorrows in our own hearts, refusing all sympathy and help."

"You wrong me, Arthur; I need sympathy and help, and I long for it more and more, every day of my life."

"And yet, when mother said something about human help and human sympathy, and about strangers intermeddling with our sorrows, — I forget the words ——"

"I remember the conversation well. I was getting over my dread of your dear mother" — smiling — "when she said in reply to some remark of yours, after a long silence at the tea-table, which used to be such a pleasant, cheerful place, after all the separations of the day were over, that 'every heart knoweth

its own bitterness,' — looking at Uncle George, you know, — and 'a stranger intermeddleth not therewith.' I cannot give the words exactly, but I know where to find them."

"Yes, — and you will remember also, that after looking at Uncle George, as if she wanted to find an excuse for him, she turned toward you, and then to me, looking straight into my eyes, when she spoke of a stranger. Do you look upon me as a stranger, Julia?"

"As a stranger, dear Arthur, — look upon you as a stranger! what *do* you mean?"

"I know, Julia, that I am sensitive and jealous, — or suspicious, if you will have it so, and very unreasonable, where I feel a deep interest; and where I see a woman like you, whom I have known so long, and loved so much, for her frankness and openness, growing silent and reserved toward everybody, sitting hour after hour by herself, with her hands locked and lying still in her lap, and tear after tear gathering slowly on her lashes, — how can I help feeling that I am no longer a brother? —— "

"Forgive me, dear Arthur."

"But rather, in comparison with what I was over sea, a stranger."

"No, no, Arthur, you must not allow yourself to think so, for a single moment. You are my brother, — my only brother, I was about to say," — wiping her eyes, and trying to speak more cheerfully, — "but how can I be as frank and open with you now, or with anybody living, as I loved to be, when we had nothing to trouble us? For two whole months, Uncle George has not been himself; and even now, though he seems to be growing better every day, and has nothing to complain of, but weariness of spirit, or some untold sorrow, you see how nervous and restless, and how silent he is. I know that your mother is troubled about him; and whenever he begins to shift about in his chair, to drum with his fingers on the table, or to poke the fire, as he did last evening, you remember — I could see her watching him till her eyes filled; and though she said nothing then, I am satisfied that she is carefully studying all these symptoms, and hopes to get at the bottom of the mystery. No, no, Arthur, while we have such a load upon our hearts, and so much

to becloud our way, we must be patient with one another, and hope for the best" — her voice faltered — "while prepared for the worst."

"Hadn't you better open the box, Julia, before anybody comes?"

"Upon my word! I had entirely forgotten the box. To be sure I will."

On opening it, she found a small paper parcel; and the next moment, on snapping the string and the seal, she exclaimed, — "Goodness, Arthur! what is the meaning of this? — how came you by it?" — holding up a net purse, and opening it as she spoke, with trembling hands, and emptying the contents into her lap; — "and the ring too, as I live! — that precious ring! and the bank-notes, and the gold, and the ——" And she stopped suddenly, covering her face with her hands, and sobbing, "Oh, Charles! Charles! Oh, my poor brother!"

"Come, come, Julia, — don't be frightened," said Arthur, all at once recollecting that she had never yet understood the story aright, and of course needed preparation, if the truth, or any large portion of the truth, were now to be communicated. But was there any need of her knowing the truth? Within a week after the last interview with her brother, and the mysterious occurrences that followed, they were all forgotten by the newspapers. The trial of the two footpads for the robbery of Charles, had taken place. They had been advised to plead guilty, or to "*own up*," as they called it, and be satisfied with a milder sentence than they richly deserved. The trial over, the purse and ring and money were ordered back to the possession of the true owner, and two days before had been delivered to Arthur, upon his receipt for Julia. The name of poor Charles had not appeared in the papers; and by great carefulness and good management, and a timely word from the Superintendent, Julia had not been required to appear at the trial of the thief who had snatched the gold chain from her neck. Not being well, and being in attendance upon the sick-bed of Major Pendleton, the prosecutor had forborne to call her; and relying upon Arthur and the Superintendent for conviction, he went to trial upon their testimony; and the miserable wretch was found guilty at once, and tick-

eted for Sing Sing, within twenty-four hours after the arraignment.

"Arthur — Cousin Arthur," said Julia, at last, overcoming her deep repugnance with a shudder, "have you heard from Charles?"

"From Charles? — no indeed!"

"Has Uncle George? or Aunt Elizabeth?"

"Not to my knowledge. But why do you ask?"

"Because ——" and she stopped suddenly, and looked at the door. Steps were heard approaching, and there was a sound of shuffling feet, as if Jerry was leading Mr. Pendleton, slowly, and step by step, through the passage-way. "In a word, Cousin Arthur, will you be so kind as to tell me, before they enter, how these things came into your possession? I told you, when you questioned me the next morning after that dreadful night, as you will remember, that they belonged to my poor brother."

"True; but you told me that when you offered them to him, he refused to touch them, and that you then dropped them into his outside coat-pocket; which, by the way, was a strange oversight in you, for as it was done without his knowledge, he might have hung up his coat in the hall, or flung it over a chair, and the purse and ring might both have been lost, or stolen, before daylight, and nobody would have been the wiser."

"Very true, Arthur, I see my fault; but there was no time for explanation;" and then, lowering her voice to a troubled whisper, she added, "Why didn't he keep them? why were they sent back to me — poor fellow!"

"How could he keep them, Julia?" said Arthur, catching eagerly at the suggestion; "after having refused them, as he did? — Ah! here they are!"

At this moment the door opened, and Mrs. Maynard entered, followed by Mr. Pendleton, looking very pale and thoughtful, and leaning on the arm of Jerry, with Bessie and Peter bringing up the rear.

"Good morning, aunt; good morning, dear uncle," said Julia, jumping up with a pleasant smile, and pushing an easy-chair toward the table. There, there, don't hurry now."

"Thank you, my dear, I am very much better, I believe," —

drawing her down to him and kissing her. "The surgeon says I have nothing to fear, with such nurses, if I will but be patient and reasonable; and your Aunt Elizabeth would say the same thing, I dare say, if you should question her when I was out of the way."

Mrs. Maynard smiled, and shook her head. Then, after adjusting a stool for his feet, arranging his slippers and dressing-gown, and seating herself at the head of the table, so that he should be always within reach, if he spoke or stirred, she handed him the morning papers, all smooth and freshly ironed, as the newspapers were at Carleton House, when George the Fourth set the fashion.

A few moments of deep and solemn stillness followed, as an expression of thankfulness, and the duties of the breakfast-table were entered upon with that graceful quiet ease which so greatly distinguishes the gentlewoman from all her bustling imitators and counterfeits.

Several attempts at conversation were made by Arthur and Julia, and even by Mrs. Maynard herself, when she saw their object; but her brother was not in the humor, and they died away into monosyllables, with long pauses, and at last into the uncomfortable subdued murmuring of a sick-chamber.

Glancing from the newspaper he held, — and from which he had just been reading aloud, in a voice that quavered with deep feeling, some accounts of the dreadful condition of things abroad, where whole communities were breaking up, and all kinds of property, except gold and silver, seemed to be growing worthless, and men's hearts were failing them for fear, — to the pale face and large serene eyes of his beloved sister, and then to the Bible, he read with deep emotion the first passage his eye lighted upon, — "Blessed are they that mourn, for *they shall be comforted.*"

"Yes, brother; such is the language, and such the promise; but ——"

"Well, why do you stop there?"

"But it does not say, Blessed are they that *murmur*, for they shall be comforted; nor, Blessed are they that *complain*, though silently, for *they shall be comforted.* Nor does it say, Blessed are they who are dissatisfied with the dealings of their heavenly Father, for they shall be comforted."

Another long silence followed. Julia knew not which way to look; while Arthur sat watching his uncle's countenance, and sipping his chocolate, as if he, too, had been set thinking for himself.

"You are right, dear Elizabeth," said her brother at last; "I understand you, and I thank you. It is not submission that is required of us, for submit we must; nor is it mere acquiescence, — the yielding that we cannot help, — it must be a cheerful, hopeful, and believing trust that we are to show, if we are to be comforted in our mourning."

"Suppose we read that very chapter this morning, brother?"

"I will hear you read it, with all my heart, Elizabeth," said her brother, handing the open Bible to her, as if afraid to trust himself any further.

The whole chapter was read, with a gentleness of intonation, a simplicity and truthfulness, which brought the tears into Julia's eyes. Much of it appeared new to her, in its tenderness and touching earnestness; and even Arthur felt soothed and comforted, familiar as he had been from earliest childhood with his mother's reading.

A short prayer followed from Uncle George, full of thankfulness, and trust, and straightforward self-condemnation. He had gone astray, and he felt it; and he not only felt, but acknowledged it. Having so much to be thankful for, — so many unacknowledged blessings to be remembered, — why should a living man complain? And if, when lifted up from the bed of sickness, and from what, at one time, threatened to be the bed of death, he went on his way beclouded or disheartened, instead of rejoicing and believing, how could he hope to be comforted?

Short as the services of the morning were, and the conversation that followed, it was evident enough that all were made happier by them, and were almost ready to "joy in their tribulation."

After running his eyes over the paper, and reading here and there a paragraph aloud, always relating to the great financial embarrassments of the season, — a season without a parallel in the history of nations, — for the wisest of mankind, statesmen as well as men of business, and philosophers, were unable to find a cause, — he sat with his elbows on the table, his hands covering

his face, and the money articles of the Courier, the Morning Herald, the Tribune, and the Journal of Commerce, all spread out before him, and the last Evening Express lying over the back of a chair, and all within reach, for comparison.

After a long, dreary silence, he looked up suddenly, and said, with something of the smile he used to wear in other days, when everything went well with him, as if he had found his way up, all at once, into a serener atmosphere, — "We are certainly the most extravagant people upon the face of the earth! I do verily believe that we waste more every day than would be sufficient to clothe, feed, and shelter for that day, another nation as large as ourselves. What say you, Elizabeth? Just compare the style of living here in this town with that of people abroad, — in London, for example, or Paris, or St. Petersburg, — in the same business, and having correspondent means. Why, there are two thousand houses, I dare say, in the city of New York, at this moment, furnished more sumptuously, and costing more money, than the town houses of the English nobility, or the dwellings of the wealthiest landholders, and bankers, and merchants of Europe."

"All very true, brother," said Mrs. Maynard, in a soft, loving voice, with her hand resting on his knee, "and very much to be lamented; but are we not all alike spendthrifts and prodigals? and forgetful of others and of ourselves, and of our Father's house, while our blessings abound? Are not the untroubled and the prosperous more to be pitied than the poor? and may they not be in greater danger, at least, of having all their good things in this world?"

Her soft eyes were upon him, and he felt it; and the musical droppings of her pleasant voice fell upon his overlaboring and overwearied heart, like summer rain. She was probing him to the quick; and growing a little uneasy at last, he thought of changing the subject, perhaps to quiet some inward misgiving; and straightway, after shifting about in the chair, and then drumming nervously with his fingers on the table, and wiping his mouth, and swallowing two or three times, he added, —

"And then, too, — in the midst of all these alarming changes throughout the commercial world, — the wealthiest bankers fail-

ing, the merchant-princes giving up their houses and carriages, and offering them for sale at prices unheard of before, and going into smaller houses, where they can get along with less help, or if they have daughters, like Mr. Stone, with a single servant, perhaps, or into lodgings; men of high character betraying their trust, or betrayed by their friends and partners, long after they had withdrawn from business, and anchored for life, as they supposed, beyond the reach of a peradventure, storm, or darkness."

"Very sad, brother."

"And mournful, too,—disheartening to the bravest and best,—for good men are beginning to feel afraid of those whom they have always known, and never questioned till now. And cases are happening every day, or coming to light, rather, every day, where it often appears that misrepresentation, cruel fraud, or complicated treachery has continued, year after year, without being suspected; while the fatherless and the widow are spoiled, and the credit of our largest and safest institutions is imperilled, and would sometimes appear to have had no foundation whatever."

"Let us not be unjust, my dear brother. It is not so with all; and I am quite sure, if we ride through Broadway and the other large business-streets of the city, we shall be satisfied that the worst is over; that the failures are, after all, but few and far between, judging by the stores and places of business that are closed, and amount, perhaps, to but a small percentage of the whole."

"I dare say you are right, Elizabeth; but ——" and again he stopped, as if he had forgotten what he wanted to say, and seemed bewildered.

"And we must not overlook the charities that still thrive in our midst, the Five Points Mission and the Nursery; nor these prayer-meetings, which seem to be multiplying all over the land; nor the great religious interest, which is not only felt, but acknowledged, by thousands and tens of thousands, who have hitherto held themselves aloof, scoffing and sneering at all such demonstrations, as downright methodism or fanaticism."

"Very true, sister. The largest halls of our largest cities are not large enough; they are crowded at noonday, and many, if

not most, of our churches and vestries and lecture-rooms are open at different hours, morning, noon, and night, for prayer."

"Yes, mother, and in passing by the Stuyvesant Institute yesterday," added Arthur, "I saw a large poster by the door, inviting all to drop in at 5 P. M., just when people are going to their dinner."

Mrs. Maynard turned with a look of earnest inquiry upon Arthur, as he continued, —

"And they have just entered into a new arrangement away down Broadway, — I have seen the notice myself up at the Exchange, — saying that the business-men's prayer-meeting would be open every day at No. —— I forget the number, though I know where it is, for they have lately come over from the other side of the street, lower down, where they had the whole second story of a large warehouse, which became 'too strait for them,' as they called it; and now they have hired this, near the corner of —— there it is again. I always forget names, you know."

His mother looked more and more pleased; and though she said nothing, she interchanged a look with Julia, and pressed her brother's arm, so that he understood her, and knew that her heart was full — brimful, and running over.

"And then, there's the prayer-meeting at Burton's Theatre — and another at the Fulton Street Church, every day, and always crowded to overflowing, I am told."

"You are *told*, Arthur?" said his mother, and her countenance changed.

"The papers all say so; and I hear it from others. And — there, there, don't be troubled — give me one good, hearty, honest, old-fashioned kiss, dear mother," going up to her, and throwing his arms round her neck, "and I will own up, like a good boy."

That mother's eyes filled, and there was a slight trembling of the mouth, and Uncle George waked up all at once, and poor Julia turned away to hide her emotion, as Arthur added, somewhat mysteriously, —

"To tell you the truth, dear mother, I have seen something of all this for myself. I have dropped into most of these meetings,

one after another, as I happened to be passing; but then, it was all out of curiosity, nothing more; do not misunderstand me; do not expect much of me, dear mother, for you know how changeable I am, and I wanted to satisfy myself as an eye-witness — nothing more."

"Better go from curiosity, than not go at all," suggested Uncle George.

"Yes, brother; go, whatever may be the motive; a chance word, a chance arrow, may reach the heart; and they that go to scoff, may remain to pray. And what has been the result, Arthur? Have you *satisfied* yourself?"

"Not altogether; but I must acknowledge that I have been greatly astonished."

"Astonished! — how?"

"At the sobriety, earnestness, and evident sincerity of the people; there have been, I believe in my conscience, no acting — no counterfeiting — no extravagance — no sudden outbreaks, nor loud cries, nor indecorum, such as I was prepared to see, from what I knew of the great revival here, about a hundred years ago. Only one single exception do I now remember; and then I was nearly carried away myself. A young man rose in Burton's Theatre, near me, and said something like this: that he little thought one year ago, when he used to tread that very stage, — while his poor broken-hearted mother was trying to hold him back, — that he should ever be found at a prayer-meeting, and in the same place. Two or three exclamations followed, in different parts of the house; and, just by me, an elderly gentleman so far forgot himself, as to applaud with his cane. I was on the point of clapping, but both of us came to our senses before any mischief was done; for the prayers and exhortations were limited to three minutes, and no exceptions were allowed while I was there."

A long silence followed. You might have heard the breathing of the poor mother.

"How wonderful!" said she at last, "how unaccountable, — for, if I am rightly informed, these are Union meetings, and people meet together in prayer, day after day, and week after week, who never looked into each other's faces before, and never

sat down together for worship in all their lives; and no one seems to know, or care, to what denomination his neighbor belongs, if he but finds him praying to a common Father."

"Nor in what language he prays; for a Hindoo, or a South Sea Islander, might pray in his own language," added Mr. Pendleton, "and the people would understand by his intonation, or look, or attitude, that he was praying, and they would pray with him."

"In such a case, however, according to St. Paul," said Arthur, with a mischievous look at Julia, "there ought to be an interpreter."

"My son," said his mother very seriously, "when Paul speaks of interpreters, declaring that he would 'rather speak five words with his understanding, that by his voice he might teach others also, than a thousand words in an unknown tongue,' he is dealing with the brethren, who claimed to have the gift of tongues."

"And he says too, I believe," added Julia, in a very low voice, "that he would rather so speak *in the church;* does he not?"

"Yes, Julia, he does indeed; thank you, my love."

"But," continued Arthur, a little piqued perhaps, and growing somewhat wilful, "he says too, if I am not mistaken, something like this: 'How is the unlearned to say amen, at the giving of thanks, seeing he understandeth not what thou sayest?'"

Uncle George smiled, and patted him on the back; but his mother grew more and more serious, and Julia more and more troubled. Both were afraid of that lurking disputatious temper, which had always characterized Arthur.

"I think, my dear son," said his mother, with a quiet gentleness of manner, and a soothing voice, which wrought wondrously upon her boy, "I think I must leave you to argue this question with yourself; but perhaps it may do no harm to remind you, that we oftentimes pray with people whose low voices and broken utterance render it very hard to understand them."

"To say nothing of their bad English, mother."

"My son!" said she, somewhat reproachfully.

"Forgive me, dear mother; I did not mean to hurt your feel-

ings; do forgive me. And now that I think of it, perhaps I *can* do something toward convincing myself. Many times have I seen people at prayer so far off that I could not hear one syllable; and once, upon a scaffold, I saw a poor woman with locked hands, and streaming eyes, trying to make herself understood — but all in vain; her sobbing and her agony were all that we could hear."

"And yet she was understood, hey?"

"Yes, Uncle George; and now that I am in for it, I am willing to go further, and acknowledge that she was not only understood, without an interpreter, but that we were all ready enough to cry amen! to her prayer. There! will that do, mother?"

His mother smiled sorrowfully.

"What you said a moment ago, my dear patient hopeful mother, — hopeful notwithstanding my waywardness and folly, — brings to my mind something that happened at the business-men's prayer-meeting, in Broadway, not a week ago. Bishop M'Ilvaine, a bishop of the Protestant Episcopal Church, took charge of the meeting; and we had prayers from a few, and exhortations from a score of preachers and laymen of different persuasions, from all parts of the land. Among others, was the Rev. Mr. Watkins of Baltimore, who owed his conversion to the prayers and faith of his mother, when he was a babe in the cradle, given over by the physicians, and gasping for breath. She knelt in her agony, and promised to dedicate her child to God, if he would but spare him. The prayer was heard. The child grew; and after years of headstrong folly and resisting waywardness, he became a preacher, almost in his boyhood. After the meeting was over, I saw a little gathering on the sidewalk, and, stopping a moment, I overheard Dr. Bethune tell a gentleman, — the very person, by the way, who applauded the actor at Burton's, by pounding on the floor with his gold-headed cane, — I knew him instantly, — well, Dr. Bethune told him that his own case was exactly parallel to that of Mr. Watkins; for when a little child, he was at the point of death; an old Scotch Presbyterian was sent for, and requested by his mother to pray for the child — to pray for its life; but he would do no such thing, and all his prayer was that God would raise him up and

set him to preaching the Gospel. And that prayer was heard;—and 'here I am, a living witness of the truth!' said the Doctor, in his jovial, hearty way, which made us all the happier, I assure you."

The conversation grew more and more serious; and long after the breakfast things were cleared away, and the work-baskets, and magazines, and new books were spread out for the day, it would break out afresh every few minutes, and run of itself in the very same channel.

Mr. Pendleton stretched himself on the sofa, which was drawn up to the fire; and Arthur lingered, as if to help his mother and Julia, — he cared not how, — whether by holding a skein of silk on his hands, reading aloud, or watching the changes of his uncle's countenance. Though haggard and pale, there was a warmth of color — a sudden flush — at times, which so entirely overspread it as to alarm his mother; and when it passed away, there would oftentimes follow a change of position, with a look or gesture of impatience, almost fretfulness, which nobody had ever seen before in Uncle George. He was evidently laboring with some great inward trial and strife.

"The strangest thing to me," said Arthur at last, throwing aside a religious paper he had just been *overlooking*, "is that believers are not more troubled about unbelievers. If our houses were on fire in the dead of night — if we were swallowing poison — if we had taken a path leading over a precipice, would they not insist on being heard? Would they be satisfied with occasionally mentioning the subject?"

"You are right, Arthur," said his uncle. "It is indeed strange, — and stranger now perhaps than ever, — now that we have such wonderful evidence of God's presence and power, and of his willingness to hear prayer and answer prayer. Unbelievers are waiting for believers to speak to them; and if they are disappointed, how can they believe in our sincerity — our truthfulness? In other words, how can they believe that we believe? As the followers of Christ, we are literally on trial for our lives, before the world, every day and every hour."

"Very true, brother. The world are looking for evidence; and if we are unfaithful, where shall they find it?"

"And then, too, let us remember," said the Major, "that he, who is not *for* the truth, is against it."

"And he who gathereth not, scattereth," added Mrs. Maynard; "but, after all, perhaps too much is expected of Christians by others. Being at best but men and women, — and more men and women, after all, than they are anything else, — large allowances ought to be made for them."

"I don't know that, dear mother. Christians profess to be something more and better than we are; and I think they are entitled to less indulgence, and ought to be more narrowly watched."

"And I agree with you so far, nephew," said Uncle George. "But I do not understand the Christian to say, 'I am holier than thou; stand thou apart.' He only says, and says truly, that the longer he lives, and the better acquainted he is with his own character, the more reason he has to be dissatisfied with himself. What were once trifles, hardly worth striving against, become at last very serious matters, if not besetting sins."

"Poor encouragement, uncle!" and then seeing his mother look troubled, he added, —

"Don't look at me so, dear mother; pray don't, you make me feel ashamed of myself."

A flash of sunshine overspread the face of that beloved mother, and both Julia and Uncle George seemed equally pleased, though nothing more was said, till Arthur began talking to himself in a low dreamy voice. "To linger over a new book," murmured he, — handing a volume to Julia as he spoke, into which he had been prying and peeping, as if it were a forbidden thing, or a confidential manuscript, — "to linger as I do over this, and be unwilling to come to the end, as a cat would play with a mouse, toying with the fruitage that hangs in our way, dallying with what we most love, and tasting and forbearing; these are to me the highest evidence of a true flavor, and a right appreciation."

"Well, and what then?" said his mother, looking up in astonishment, and waiting to see how the speech was to end.

"Really," said Uncle George, turning toward Arthur, "I should like to understand what you are thinking of just now, and what you are driving at."

Arthur laughed, — "I wish I could tell you," said he, and appealed to Julia.

But Julia smiled, and said nothing.

"Well, if I must, I must," continued Arthur, — shaking back his abundant hair with a toss, like that of a young romp running wild, with her hat off, and playing over the hill-side in the fresh summer wind, — "it seemed a pretty thing to say, on the whole, and I was wondering how it would apply in serious matters."

"I hardly know how to deal with you, my dear son; there are times when I am obliged to say to myself that I do not understand you."

"Just so with me," said Uncle George. "How often, after a conversation like this with him, and we have been talking together like two brothers, he startles me — you cannot deny it, Arthur — by some such out-of-the-way remark as we have just heard, so that I hardly know what to think of him, nor when he is in earnest and when otherwise, or whether I have not been dreaming."

"All very true, Uncle George; but the fault is in my nature; and it sometimes happens that I myself do not know whether I am in earnest, or whether I have not been dreaming."

"This will never do, nephew. You must be serious. You have much to be thankful for, and must not be allowed to throw the blame upon your nature; as if your nature were something different from yourself, and you were not answerable for the doings of what you call your nature."

Julia looked at Mr. Pendleton, as if heartily approving of what he said.

"And the teachings of our heavenly Father, my dear son, are all opposed to your theory, whatever may be our nature, as you call it, or natural temper or disposition. Whatever we may do, under its promptings and impulses, or deliberately, we are to answer for hereafter, and, perhaps, here."

"That which a man soweth, shall he not also reap?" added Uncle George.

"Even so, dear brother, but with this great aggravation: He does not reap just what he sowed, but much more abundantly. If he sow the wind, he shall reap, not the wind only, but the whirlwind."

Arthur felt this, and the smile died away upon his lip, and a swift shadow hurried athwart his high pale forehead, as he saw a look of intelligence interchanged between his mother and uncle.

"You have not forgotten, Arthur, how near you came to the very death you have always most dreaded, only a few months ago?"

Arthur shuddered, and Julia turned very pale, and her little hand shook so, that she was obliged to lay down the slipper she was working.

"Nor how many times you have been raised up from the bed of sickness, nor how often we have been left mourning for you, and, but for the consolation of prayer, without hope; and yet you have been spared, and have always seemed thankful for a time, and almost ready to look the greatest of all questions in the face, even that of life or death hereafter; but you are no sooner lifted up and sent on your way rejoicing, than the nature you complain of — instead of your watching over it, or upbraiding yourself — resumes her mastery over you, and you become careless, thoughtless, disputatious, and presumptuous. I must be plain with you, my dear child, and you must bear with me, if not for my sake, for the sake of your dead father."

"Mother, dear mother, in mercy spare me! I feel every word you say, like an arrow in my heart. I remember all that my poor father used to urge upon me, and upon you, as we sat together in that pleasant death-chamber, with the evening sky and the wide water before us; when he seemed to be lifted up from the earth, and we were lifted up with him, as he held our hands in his, and now and then a slight murmur, just above his breath, would reveal to us that he felt himself in the presence-chamber of the Most High, and was chiefly anxious for your comfort, my dear mother, and for the salvation of his boy. How well do I remember all this, and how thankful we were that he had his senses at last; and then, when he passed away, though his wonderful eyes were uplifted, as if he saw the heavens opening, he never let go our hands for a single moment, until he had breathed his last. It was to me, dear mother, as if he wanted to take us with him; as if he could not bear to leave us behind."

"But how soon was all this forgotten, my dear Arthur," added Uncle George, wiping his eyes. "Every day of my life do I reproach myself, dear Elizabeth, for having misunderstood that man, year after year, as I did."

"Hush, brother, hush! We are wandering off into by and forbidden paths. Let the past be forgotten, I pray you; and let us be more thankful, and patient, and hopeful, and cheerful." There was a meaning in her low sweet voice, which deepened into earnest pathos, and a strange significance, thought Arthur, as she continued, — "for we have always so much to be thankful for."

"Always, mother?"

"Always, my dear, so long as we have our reason; so long as we are able to reckon up the blessings we have left, — blessings not only unacknowledged, but unfelt, in the day of untroubled prosperity, — we shall always find that we have more to be thankful for than to complain of, a thousand times over."

Uncle George looked up in astonishment, and even Arthur seemed bewildered; though Julia, if one might judge by the deep serenity of her countenance, entertained the same settled belief that her aunt was acknowledging.

"Yes, brother, our greatest blessings, after all, are the commonest; are they not? Good air, good water, good health, reason, hope, the word of truth, untroubled sleep, our eyesight and our hearing, the gift of speech, and the comforts of household relationship."

"Upon my word, sister, I believe you are right!" said Uncle George. "I never thought of this before."

But Arthur shook his head. It was clear that he had something to say on the other side.

"Not until I get through, if you please, my son," said his mother, smiling at the earnestness of his look, and the preternatural brightness of his eager eyes. "Wait a moment; for I am only saying what I have heard your father say over and over again, when we were most troubled, and our sorrows and bereavements were most unbearable; and up to the last hour of his life, he continued to maintain the same opinions. 'If we are wronged and spoiled, if we are pillaged and stripped, Elizabeth,'

he would say, 'let us reckon up what we have left to be thankful for; let us compare ourselves with others who are worse off. Wealth, honor, distinction, popular favor, what are all these weighed against good health, a clear understanding, a pleasant temper, social and religious privileges, the power of moving our limbs at will, and of using our bodily faculties undisturbed? What in fact are they really worth to us here, in comparison with air and water, and the gift of seeing, and hearing, and feeling, or of sound and refreshing sleep?'"

"How strange," said Arthur; "and yet, on the whole, how true! What are pearls to the hungry man, who wants a handful of wheat, or a drop of water? When we were put upon short allowance for a few days only, what was our California gold worth?"

"Yes, Arthur," added Uncle George, "and the fresh air we so much undervalue, merely because, like water, it is so common? What would the poor fellows in the black hole of Calcutta have given for a single gulp? or Tippoo Sahib himself, had he been there? — all the riches of his empire, gold and jewels, and sceptre and throne!"

"All very true, I dare say," continued Arthur, in a doubtful way, as if trying to find a different answer; "I only wish it could be proved."

"Proved!" murmured Julia. "Why, Cousin Arthur, what do you mean? Have you not just proved it for yourself?"

"Yes; but ——"

"Arthur! Arthur, my son! You must watch yourself! You are in danger. While professing to seek the truth, you are liable to be turned aside by the adversary, at any moment."

Arthur looked somewhat abashed for an instant; but he soon recovered himself. "Excuse me, dear mother. I do not mean to deny the beautiful truth in question; I am even willing to acknowledge it, and to abide by it."

"Ah!"

"But ——"

"O, confound your buts!" said Uncle George.

Arthur laughed outright; and then, seeing his mother look troubled, he added, "All I want to say is, that while I acknowl-

edge the truth of your declaration, that our commonest blessings are our greatest blessings, I only wish it could be proved — in some other way; for, when my head is aching, how am I to remember just then that my limbs are safe, or that my neighbor's are not?"

"Is there any other way, Cousin Arthur?" whispered Julia. "What we are ready to give in exchange for something else cannot be worth so much in our estimation."

"Very fair, Julia."

"But, my dear son, we will not argue the question further — unless you desire to take the other side?"

"I understand you, dear mother," said he, after musing awhile; and then, with a sudden change of manner, quite startling, he added, "You are right, and the truth can be proved to a demonstration, without going to Calcutta!"

His mother smiled; but her lip quivered as she begged him to continue, till he had answered himself. "It was in the family," she added; "there was hardly one of the name who was ever willing to be convinced by another. All were fond of controversy to the last; and all were born chess-players, and oftentimes troublesome logicians."

This was said pleasantly, but with great seriousness.

"My proof, mother, strikes me as absolutely conclusive."

"Well?"

"Take away our eyesight, our hearing, or sense of touch, — paralyze our limbs, — deprive us of speech, — and life itself becomes comparatively worthless. Yet all these, like air and water, are the commonest blessings of earth. It is not so with riches and power, with jewels and gold, nor with most of the things we chiefly desire and labor for, through long lives of self-denial and sorrow and strife."

"Are you satisfied, Arthur?"

"Perfectly, dear mother."

"Well, then, having come to your senses, let us be thankful."

"Dear mother!"

"Well, my dear son!"

"We are always unthankful, even for our greatest blessings, until they are withdrawn, or threatened, are we not?"

"I think so."

"It is the last loaf we cling to, — the last penny we cannot bear to part with, — the last few minutes of life we are most thankful for."

"Even so, Arthur."

"How strange! Think you, dear mother, that the man just healed of his blindness remembered to thank the great Physician for his hearing, — without which he would never have known that he was going by, nor have heeded the trampling multitude, — or for not being a paralytic?"

"No," said his mother; "and I thank you with all my heart for propounding such a question."

Here Arthur looked at his watch, and begging to be excused, took leave with great seriousness, bowing his head and stepping softly, as if stealing away from prayer.

A deep and long-continued thoughtfulness ensued. Nobody felt inclined to talk. Mr. Pendleton had covered his face with a newspaper, and nothing was to be heard for a while but the low breathing of the sick man, and the steady, quick snapping of Julia's needles.

But soon afterwards a coal dropped on the fender, and Uncle George sprang up, with a look which sadly frightened Julia, and set her aunt upon a still more searching scrutiny.

"Elizabeth," said be at last, after a brief inward struggle, "I hardly know what to think of Arthur; have you any hope?"

"Yes, brother; for while there is life, there is hope; and it is something to find that he drops in occasionally at one of these prayer-meetings; and it may be — O, my brother, it may be, that our prayers will be heard and answered, as many others have been so clearly of late, and that my poor boy may be brought to pray for himself."

"I hope so, dear Elizabeth. God grant that *your* prayers may be heard!"

"And why not yours, my brother?"

"Because ——" but glancing at Julia, he stopped; and then, after a short pause, continued, as if a newer thought had taken possession of his mind, or that he preferred leaving what he had to say to his sister till they were alone together. "We are

so liable to be led away by our wishes, dear Elizabeth — so liable to delusion — our hearts are so deceitful, that I sometimes tremble for the worthiest and lowliest of all the Christians about me."

"It is well we should, my brother. The greater our progress, the less likely are we to be satisfied with ourselves. We are to work out our salvation with fear and trembling."

"With fear, sister! Are we not assured that God is love, and that perfect love casteth out fear?"

"A slavish fear, — a cowardly terror, we are not allowed to feel; but, with perfect love, we may have a wholesome awe, — a continual dread of our Father's displeasure, if we step aside, even for a moment."

Here Julia stole away, as if she understood the secret purpose of her aunt, or had received a signal.

The door was hardly shut, when Mrs. Maynard went up to the sofa, and taking the hand of her brother, and looking at him steadfastly, said, in a very deliberate manner, and in her lowest tone, "Dear George, I have long waited for this; I have been watching day after day, and week after week, for the symptoms I now see."

Her brother turned away to avoid her look; but he trembled, and his forehead flushed.

"And I am now satisfied."

"*Satisfied*, Elizabeth!"

"Even so; and when I say, as I do now, 'How is it with thee, my brother?' I am sure that you will understand me, and believe at once that I see what you are laboring night and day to hide from us."

The paper rustled in his hands.

"Well, sister, what do you see? What is it I am trying to hide from you?" said her brother, without looking at her. "What is it you have so lately discovered?"

"My dear brother, you frighten me. The trouble is deeper than we have supposed. Our children have been watching me, while I have been watching you; and, while they share in my uneasiness, — finding their uncle so unlike himself, and growing more and more unlike every day, — they have no idea of the truth."

"And what is the truth, I pray you?" said the sick man, his broad chest heaving, and his whole body trembling, as he flung away from the caressing hand of that beloved sister, and something like a sob escaped him, and then threw up his arms wildly into the air.

"O, my brother! my poor brother! For trouble of mind like yours, for the helpless and the hopeless, there can be no relief, no comfort, but in prayer. Only by waiting upon God, my brother, can we hope for consolation!"

At these words, her brother turned toward her, with a pale, agitated countenance, and said, in a low, rasping, husky voice, that filled her with a mysterious terror, — "Many are they who believe themselves to be waiting *on* God, in prayer, while they are only waiting *for* him, sister."

"Undoubtedly, my dear brother, but ——"

"Fools! and self-deceivers! Do they not know, will they never understand, that whatever God requires of man to do for himself, no other being, not even God himself, can, or will do for him?"

Elizabeth was awe-struck. Never in all her life had the voice of her brother sounded so strangely, so despairingly to her. There seemed to be in it something of that cry — of that exceeding great and bitter cry, which was heard from Esau, when he had been spoiled of his birthright by a brother, and he lifted up his voice and wept.

"In the name of our heavenly Father, George! what is the dreadful secret? What have we to fear? Will you not tell me?"

"What have we to fear, sister! Everything! I have lost all hope!"

"What do you mean, brother?"

"You will drive me mad, Elizabeth, if you persist! I am weary of life ——"

"You cannot mean what you say! Your long and trying sickness, my dear brother, has enfeebled you, and you mistake shadows for mountains."

"Visions and shadows both; and I dream dreams — and such dreams! They scare me! O, my dear sister!" catching both of her hands convulsively to his heart.

"Once more, my brother, I must ask you what you mean by saying you have lost all hope?"

"Very well, then," — lifting himself up from the sofa, and facing her with a ghastly quietness of manner that left her speechless. "If you must know, you shall, — *we are ruined!*"

Elizabeth grew very pale.

"Absolutely ruined! And I have lost, not only all hope in man, but all trust in God!"

Amazed and overwhelmed, and filled with consternation, his poor sister slipped down upon her knees, and covering her face with her hands, and sobbing as if her heart would break, appeared to be praying for her brother.

By and by she looked up; and then she rose, and, with a smile that brought the tears into her brother's eyes, kissed him on the forehead and lips, and then added, "Be comforted, my poor brother! be of good cheer! There is one who hath promised never to leave, nor forsake them that put their trust in Him; and knowing my brother, as I do, I have no fear, whatever he may now say or think, that he will be permitted to withdraw his trust at a time like this. And therefore do I say again, — be comforted!"

"But, my poor sister, you do not know the worst; you have no idea of my sufferings, chiefly on your account, and on account of the dear children."

"There spoke my dear brother once more!"

"For two whole months," he gasped out, "I have been looking, day after day, for my death-warrant!" and saying this, he fell back upon the sofa, speechless and motionless.

"George! — brother! — Merciful God! what shall I do? Julia! — Arthur! help! help!" and she sprang for the bell-rope; and then recollecting herself, turned the key, and seizing a tumbler of ice-water, sprinkled it over his face, while he lay gasping for breath, and growing blue about the mouth, and shivering all over. But signs of returning life soon appeared; and when she looked into his eyes, the wildness that had so troubled and frightened her a few minutes before, had vanished, and he lay before her now, weak and submissive, and patient as a sick child.

How thankful was the poor sister that she had not called for help from abroad! that no stranger had been present to hear the awful words, which, though prompted by delirium, as she thought, had thrilled her very blood with horror.

Here, then, was a part of the mystery solved; but a part only. And who should say how much more might remain behind, to overwhelm her at a future day? God help her!

CHAPTER VII.

ANOTHER week has gone by, and great changes are in contemplation. What they are, nobody knows but the brother and sister, who spend most of their time together in the examination of old papers, and weather-worn letters, most of which are destroyed, while others are filed away, and labelled with the greatest care.

Mr. Pendleton is better and stronger; and the look of discouragement and self-distrust, which so troubled Mrs. Maynard, has given way to something worthier and more hopeful — an expression of settled purpose, and patient forecast.

Julia and Arthur, too, are both busy; and though unacquainted with the plans of dear Uncle George, are so thankful to find him growing better, day by day, and beginning to take an interest in something, — it matters little what, — anything were better than the weary listlessness and helplessness they had seen so much of, month after month, that they no longer watch him as they did, nor trouble themselves about his breathing, or the steadfastness of his look into the fire, when they are sitting together in silence after dinner; nor about the play of his fingers upon the table or chair, when he is left long to himself. They are even getting reconciled to the smell of burnt paper; and do not much mind being left by themselves, and kept in the dark, while the brother and sister have long consultations together, every day of their lives, and a stately, solemn, gray-headed legal adviser comes and goes without ceremony, always looking more and more thoughtful and troubled every time he goes away.

"What can it all mean?" said Julia to Arthur, as they were sitting together, long after the usual hour of bedtime, waiting

for Mrs. Maynard. "There must be something very serious, to keep Aunt Elizabeth up to so late an hour."

"I wish I knew," said Arthur, leaning back in his chair, shading his eyes from the light with a book, which he had held open for a whole hour, without having understood a paragraph, watching the play of Julia's beautiful countenance unobserved, and wondering at himself that he should be satisfied with such a humdrum, sleepy way of passing his time. "I really *do* wish I knew," he repeated. "I am not curious about other people's affairs; I am not apprehensive, as you know, Julia; and I am not inquisitive."

Julia smiled.

"By nature, I mean, of course. I am too indolent, or perhaps I had better say, too lazy; but I defy any human being not to become a little anxious, when there is so much of whispering, and telegraphing, and beckoning, all about him; with the slow, cautious opening and shutting of doors unexpectedly, and shadows creeping through the passage-ways; and faces looking out, and signals given, and whispers interchanged between Peter and Jerry and Bessie, twenty times a day; and that old, stately, gray-headed lawyer going in and out, so quietly and softly, at all hours, just as if he had the run of the house."

"I have no doubt we shall know whatever your dear mother may think we ought to know — all in due time; but Arthur, how are they getting along up at the house? I am tired to death of this hotel-life, and long to be under our own roof once more."

Arthur fidgeted in his chair, but made no reply.

"You have been up there to-day, I suppose?"

"No, Julia. I am tired of going there. To tell you the truth, I do not half like their movements; I do not see that anything has been done for the last three weeks."

"Indeed!"

"And what is more, I have an idea that there must be some hindrance in the way; and that one cause of the trouble we have had with poor Uncle George, is the delay in finishing that confounded house, the weather being so unfavorable. I do not wonder you are sick of hotels; but I wonder more that mother does not insist on going at once into private lodgings, if the house

cannot be made endurable, without further delay. Nobody thinks more highly of the St. Nicholas than I do, and I could get along very well here, by myself."

"And without me!" said Julia; and a pleasant smile played for a moment, like inward light, over her whole countenance.

"Yes, Julia; and without mother, and without Uncle George; for you are all three domesticated, and must have a home, — a home that belongs to you, — while I can live anywhere, and almost anyhow, after the rough and tumble of so many years. By the way though, Julia, isn't it very strange that Uncle George, of all people on earth, should have had to dicker with that chaffering Aunt Marie, as they call her, without any suspicion of the truth, till the title had to be investigated, after what happened here the first morning we ever saw her?"

"Rather strange, I confess; but we knew the family abroad, many years ago; and I have some recollection of meeting her at one of the cheap watering-places that abound along the English coast, — Ramsgate, or Margate, or Broadstairs, I forget which."

"O, that explains it; for she has taken a great fancy to you, it appears, and talks about you, as if you had been playfellows in your childhood, or gone to school together."

Julia could not help laughing; and Arthur thought she had never looked so handsome — Ah! ——

The door opened softly, and as they both turned to see who it was, a beckoning hand appeared, and the name of Julia was uttered in a whisper.

Somewhat startled, Julia did not instantly recognize the voice, though she went to the door.

"Your uncle wants to see you immediately; run up to him, and I will wait for you here," said Mrs. Maynard, entering on tiptoe, and taking a seat by the fire in silence, as Julia hurried up the stairs.

Arthur turned to speak to her, and to make some inquiries about Uncle George, when, struck by her uncommon seriousness, and great paleness, he stopped suddenly, and sat looking at her in breathless expectation, while his mother had her eyes fixed upon the door, and seemed to be listening. It was near mid-

night, and still there seemed to be no preparation for bed. What could be the matter? What new mystery was gathering about their way? And why, of all women alive, should that dear mother, who hated all sorts of managing, and manœuvring, and whispering, and hitherto would have no more been guilty of it, in her openness and womanly self-respect, than she would have listened at a chamber-door in passing, or have read an open letter lying in her way, — why should she be wandering about the house like a spirit, and making signs through a half-open door, in the dead of night? Before he could make up his mind, Julia reappeared, and, without speaking, hurried into her little dressing-room, and after rummaging there awhile, came back with her little net purse and a portfolio in her hand, looking troubled and anxious, and was about returning to her uncle's room; when, just as her hand touched the lock of the door, Mrs. Maynard inquired if *she* was wanted up stairs.

"No, I believe not," said Julia; "what Uncle George desires to say to me, I think from what has already happened, he means to be confidential for the present."

Saying this, and throwing the end of her shawl over the portfolio she carried, as if to hide it even from the watchful eyes of Arthur, she left the room, with a light, hurried step, leaving her Aunt Elizabeth looking after her in blank astonishment, and her Cousin Arthur watching his mother's countenance, and waiting for her to speak first.

On returning to the room of Uncle George, Julia found him standing bolt upright, just within the door, as if expecting somebody else to appear.

"Come in, Julia," said he, taking her hand as he spoke, and turning the key of the door very slowly and cautiously; "be seated, my love, — come nearer the fire," lowering his voice, and glancing at the keyhole of the door, — "hush! do you hear anything?"

"Nothing," said Julia. "You will find the notes you inquired about in this little purse."

"Are they all there, Julia?"

"All, I believe; though I have brought my portfolio, to see if by any chance one might have been left behind or overlooked."

Mr. Pendleton grew paler and paler; breathing more and more laboriously, as he fumbled at the clasp, with hands that shook so as to frighten the poor child.

"Open it for me, Julia, — I am very weak and foolish; but my mind is made up."

"There!" said she at last; "there they are, I believe, just as they came into my hands after the —— just as I saw them last."

"I understand you, Julia," taking the notes, almost snatching them, indeed, from her hand, as it lay in her lap; "one — two — three — four — five; only five, Julia? What has become of the others? And the largest of all, the fifty-pound note? You do not answer me, Julia — dear Julia — but I *must* know. It is a matter of life and death, my poor child! Have you" — hesitating, and fastening his large eyes on the door, with a look of gloomy determination — "Have you parted with it, Julia?"

Instead of answering, Julia had opened her portfolio, and after a little rummaging she found three more notes, which her uncle seized with a suddenness that startled her.

"Five, six, seven, Julia," — said her uncle, counting them over hurriedly, and crushing them together in his hand, — "you must have had more; what have you done with them? Tell me, I beseech you, — have no concealment, — or you may bring upon all our heads a swift and overwhelming retribution!"

"Retribution, Uncle George?"

"Yes, Julia, retribution; for he that sows the wind shall reap the whirlwind! Once more, I ask you, have you passed any of these notes? — don't be frightened, my love. You think I am wandering; I wish I were."

"I will answer you, dear uncle. I have not passed any of them."

"God bless you, my child."

"I have not even offered to pass one since that evening when the smallest I had about me — a twenty, I believe — was refused at the bar, and I exchanged it for gold."

"Refused! O, I remember. And now, dearest child, as you have neither passed them, nor offered to pass them, let me know, I beseech you, just what you have done with them. I have my

suspicions, — I know well how these came back into your possession," — shuddering — "but I must know from your own lips where the largest is, and the two missing twenties?"

"Dear uncle, forgive me; but as you already know so much, and as the secret cannot be kept much longer, I must tell you everything."

"There's a brave girl!"

"Nearly two months ago I received a mysterious note from poor Charles, and in my reply, through an appointed channel, I enclosed the fifty-pound note and two of the twenties."

A half-smothered groan escaped from her uncle's ashy lips as he sprang up, and running his eye over the notes once more, gave them a twist, crushed them together, and flung them into the fire.

Julia uttered an exclamation of terror, as she started up and tried to save them, but she was too late; a sudden flash, and they were swept off, all blazing, up the chimney; and when she turned to see if her uncle had really gone mad upon the spot, she found him upon his knees, with his face buried in the sofa-pillows; and for a few minutes, in the awful stillness of the room, there was nothing to be heard but a sound of smothered sobbing, and low murmuring and supplication.

"God bless you, dear Julia! God forever bless you!" said her uncle, rising from prayer, and lifting his locked hands high up over her bowed head. "Leave me now, it is very late; say nothing, not one word of all this, to any living creature, I beseech you; not even to your Aunt Elizabeth, who will know everything at a proper time. Good-night."

Julia had reached the door, when she was arrested by another brief question.

"Where was your brother at the time he wrote you?"

"If you insist, dear uncle, —"

"No, I do not insist, my love; but perhaps you can tell me whether he received your letter in reply?"

"No, I cannot. I have not heard from him since."

"Have you any sure way of communication with him now?"

"Nothing certain, till I hear again; though perhaps a letter might reach him through the channel he first mentioned."

"Stop, stay, there is another question I would ask; but you may not be able to answer it."

"Perhaps I may."

"Well, then, if your letter with the notes did not reach him, do you know whether it would go to our General Post-Office at Washington, or to a foreign post-office?"

"No, I am not sure. It would be likely to follow him over sea, I think."

"Well, then, Julia," continued her uncle, after musing awhile, "there is nothing more to be done, till we know more. Meanwhile, write your brother immediately, and write several times, and tell him not to make use of the notes you sent him, *under any circumstances;* and, in fact, you may as well beg him to destroy them at once, and say you do so at my desire."

"I do not understand you, Uncle George; you frighten me."

"I cannot stop to explain the dreadful mystery now, my dear Julia; but you saw me burn a handful of these notes before your face not five minutes ago; and you know enough of me, however much I may have changed of late, enfeebled as I have been by sickness and threatened death, and literally haunted with spectres and phantoms and hobgoblins night and day, enough, I am sure, my dear child, to believe, notwithstanding appearances, that I am still in my right mind, and that I had good reasons for what I did."

Julia grew faint and pale; but the look interchanged between her uncle and herself as he opened the door to her, showed that she understood him, without another word of explanation. But although she said nothing, and asked no questions, it was altogether impossible for her not to think, until, as she entered the room below, where she found her aunt and cousin sitting together in dead silence — Arthur leaning upon his mother's shoulder, and the mother holding him fast by the hand, and both gazing into the fire — she was half inclined to throw herself into her Aunt Elizabeth's arms, and ask to have the fearful mystery cleared up, whatever might be the consequences to herself. And then she thought of her brother, and a dark portentous foreshadowing fell upon her, with a shuddering sense of impending calamity, not to be spoken of, and of utter helplessness and coming woe.

"Sit down, dear Julia," said her aunt, as she entered and stood by the fire, looking first at her aunt and then at Arthur, as if undetermined whether to go to bed at once, or to linger awhile in that comfortable and pleasant home atmosphere, in the hope that something might be said by her Aunt Elizabeth, or by Arthur, to comfort her. "Late as it is, we had better sit up awhile; for, judging by your looks, and by my experience for the last fortnight, we are none of us likely to sleep if we go to bed."

A mournful, patient smile was the only answer Julia could trust herself to make; but she stole round to the other side of her aunt, and took the other hand into both of hers, and bowing her face upon it, in speechless and helpless expectation, waited for the word of comfort she so much wanted.

After a long and almost painful silence, followed by a brief struggle, Mrs. Maynard drew toward her the large Bible that always lay within reach upon a work-table in the corner, and opening at the seventy-seventh psalm, pushed it in front of Arthur, as if to prepare the way for something else, and asked him to read it for them.

When he had finished, there was another long silence, and a sound of low breathing and whispering, so that even Arthur began to feel oppressed and troubled; and while the deep, calm seriousness of his dear mother set him thinking at large of the past, when his father was alive, and music, and the reading of a psalm, and wise-hearted conversation were always a part of their evening exercise in the sick-chamber, the sadness of poor Julia, and the expression of unutterable woe in her unchanging eyes and parted lips, filled him with a vague terror. It was clear to him, as he afterwards acknowledged, that she was longing to ask a question, but afraid to open her mouth, lest her voice might break forth into sobbing; for she seemed ready to cry out with old Lear, — "not there! not there! for that way madness lies!" — whenever the thought presented itself — whatever it was — a thought she would sooner die than breathe aloud. Meanwhile a hot flush had passed over her forehead, while Arthur was watching her; and he saw his mother look at her, as if alarmed at the silent inward struggle she felt, in the continual change of her position, as the poor child

nestled closer and closer to her, — trying to hide her face and conceal her agitation.

"My dear children," said the mother at last, taking a hand of each, and dropping a tear upon Julia's, from her uplifted eyes, "it is high time for you to know something of what has happened. You have both wondered at the behavior of your uncle, — at the strange thoughtfulness you saw, and the stranger forgetfulness of everybody and everything before he was hurt. I have heard you both speak of it more than once, and I have been watching him ever since my arrival here, to find out the real cause, until I came to the conclusion, about a week ago, that the trouble was in his mind."

"Yes, mother."

"He had never had any secrets from me before; and never in all his life had he appeared to shrink from any questioning of mine, so that I knew there must be something very serious, — overwhelming, perhaps, to a sick man oppressed with care, — something, whatever it was, which needed probing to the bottom. To see my poor brother, — a man of such high principle and lofty purposes, with such a giant will, with such strength of mind, and such a large experience in the trials and vicissitudes of life; a religious man, too, acquainted with his own heart, and knowing whither to go for consolation, — to see such a man giving way altogether, and at once, under the pressure of a mysterious grief, — losing his appetite and sleep, and growing peevish and querulous and gloomy, — taking no interest in our comfort or companionship, and refusing to seek relief where relief only could be found — in prayer, and patient, hopeful trust; — O, heavenly Father! how shall I thank thee for thy goodness, in showing me the dreadful condition of that beloved brother, before it was too late! Do you know, dear children, that after what has happened, I do not believe my poor brother would ever have left his bed, if I had been kept away much longer, or if I had not wrestled with him night and day, till he was persuaded to tell me what his troubles were, what had happened, and what he feared, and then to cast the burden upon the Lord. You are astonished, Julia, — and you, too, Arthur; I can see it in your eyes; and I dare say that both of you are wondering why a

religious man should not always cast his burdens upon the Lord, — why it should ever be needful to remind him of prayer, and of God's faithfulness and love."

"Yes, mother, you are right," said Arthur. "Nothing has ever troubled me so much — and I can answer for Julia, too, I think — as to see such a man, a declared follower of the meek and lowly Jesus, a church-member, giving way to —— I may as well say it, perhaps, dear mother, as think it, — giving way to despair; breaking up all at once; and just when hope was most needed, abandoning all hope ——"

"Well, my dear children, — but this you are never to mention while you breathe, — having known your dear uncle so many years, not only by reputation, but personally, as a religious man, truly humble and pious, a devout and cheerful Christian, and not a sad, or mournful, or complaining Christian, I do not wonder that you should be greatly perplexed by such behavior, and greatly troubled; but when I have told you more, — and it is this I would not have you mention while you live, out of the family, — you will not wonder so much, and may, perhaps, find some little excuse for him."

"Yes, mother; and I am doubly anxious to find that excuse, or to find anything like a reason for such a departure in Uncle George from all the distinguishing habits of his life. Heretofore, when everybody else would be downhearted, and ready to give up, — even my dear father at one time, you know, when everything went wrong for a while, and he thought we were beggared, — there was nobody on earth to whom we could go with such a certainty of being always cheered and comforted, as to Uncle George. How often, too, have I heard him say, that if religion is to be recommended to the unbelieving, it must be by cheerfulness — by bearing up against sorrow and trial, disappointed hopes and bereavement, as the world's people do not, and cannot. We may get along pretty well without religion, he used to say, so long as we have nothing to trouble us; but if we desire to know what religion is good for, and what our heavenly Father's love is worth, we must be persuaded to go to him; and this we never do so long as we can help it; in other words, we never do so, till we have lost all confidence in ourselves and in others, and must

go to him for strength and consolation. Why, Julia, don't you remember the last evening we spent together, before Charles went off to California? What I have just been saying is but the substance of all he said to us then. We need to be troubled — we must be tried, or we forget ourselves, and forget God. *And I believe it.*"

His mother lifted his hand to her lips, without speaking; but another tear fell upon Julia's forehead.

"What can they know of rest, who have never been wearied, aunt?" whispered Julia; "or they of consolation, who have not been afflicted?"

"Of course, dear mother, Uncle George has other troubles; but if we were all beggars, I cannot see how that would justify such entire self-abandonment in a man of his character, much less in a follower of Him, who has promised never to leave nor forsake them that put their trust in Him."

"'Whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth,' my son."

"Yes, dear aunt," whispered Julia; "'and when thy father and thy mother forsake thee,'" her voice trembled, "'then will the Lord take thee up.'"

"But I interrupted you, dear mother. Please finish what you had to say."

"I will. But, first, a word or two upon what you have just mentioned. Your uncle has met with heavy losses; and worse yet, he has been cruelly entrapped, and wronged, and betrayed 'by a familiar friend,' in some way, I know not how; and but for the mercy of God, might have had his character blasted by a strange concurrence of circumstances, incapable of explanation without proof, and the proof was beyond his reach."

Julia hid her face, with a slight shudder. She durst not speak, nor breathe, nor even look up, in the dread of what might be coming at last.

"To be beggared, Arthur, we could bear, I trust, with some degree of composure; but to have your uncle disgraced, — no matter how, — to have him looked upon as a sharper —— "

"A sharper! Uncle George a sharper!"

"Or if not a sharper, at least as a crafty and cold-hearted, if not a dishonest man; *that*, I am afraid, we should have all found

hard to bear. But with all this, and just when there seemed to be no hope, no possibility of escape, and my poor brother had no place of refuge on earth, all at once he began to have doubts of a most alarming character, which threatened to drive him crazy."

"What were they, mother? Your look frightens me."

"I am almost afraid to tell you, my dear children; but that you may both understand the weakness of poor human nature, — the craft and power of the Adversary, and where our strength lies in the day of trouble, — I dare not withhold the truth. Your Uncle George had been growing worse and worse for two or three weeks before I came on; and it was not until I had talked with his physicians, who saw nothing in the nature of his injury to confine him so long to his bed, that I began to suspect, as I have told you already, that the trouble was in his mind. As soon as I felt satisfied, I charged him with it; and after a long and frightful struggle, he yielded to my tears and prayers, and acknowledged the truth. And, now, what do you think it was?"

"I have no idea," said Julia, in a faint voice, while her heart contradicted her words, and her look almost betrayed her misgivings.

"Nor I," added Arthur, "I am all at sea, mother."

"The last thing in the world, perhaps, that either of you would have thought of. He had begun to doubt his own convictions ——"

"His own convictions! — how? — I do not understand."

"To believe that he had never been truly converted."

"Never truly converted!" said Julia, lifting her head in amazement, "and a church-member!"

"Never truly converted!" added Arthur, "and a communicant for over twenty years, as I heard him acknowledge once, in a conversation with father. And pray, what led him to this change of opinion just at this time? just when, if ever, he most needed the consolations he had been waiting for, and hoping for, so long?"

"All at once he had become acquainted with the deceitfulness of his own heart; and finding no relief in prayer, — no such comfortable assurance of what he had never so much needed, as

he thought he must have felt, if he had been truly a child of God, looking for consolation, — he straightway began to despair."

"O, my poor uncle!" whispered Julia.

"But, mother, is there not something beyond all this? I cannot understand how such a man, after twenty years of experience, could be self-deceived; nor how he should be able to find out, after so long a time, that he had been deceived."

"I must now tell you more, my son. You have attended some of these prayer-meetings, but you have probably no idea that your uncle knew more of them than you did, even while he was questioning you."

"Indeed!"

"It seems that he had been to Burton's Theatre, and at the meeting in Fulton Street every day, up to the time of his accident; and that while there, he had seen such things, and heard such things, not only from new converts, but from old, though sluggish professors, that he began to feel uneasy in his mind, and greatly to fear that he himself, in common with many others he listened to there, had been under a delusion. The injury following, that endangered his life, and the business-troubles, and the treachery of a friend, the stillness of a sick-chamber, with nothing else to think of, led to the result I have mentioned. But, dear children, let us remember to thank our heavenly Father, from this time forward, morning, noon, and night, that your dear uncle has come out of the cloud at last, and if we are patient with him, we have little or nothing to fear. And now, good-night, both! You need not hurry down to-morrow morning. We shall have a late breakfast, and a great deal of business on our hands; for your uncle has made up his mind to something serious and conclusive, which must be finished to-morrow, whatever may be the consequences; and we shall want your help, Arthur."

"Good-night! Good-night!"

And Julia was left alone to her meditations.

CHAPTER VIII.

EARLY the next morning, so early, indeed, that the parlor in which a fire had been kept burning all night was uncomfortably cool, the brother and sister were in consultation together, and both muffled up to the eyes, with shawls and cloaks and furs, and both stowed away into a deep sofa, which they had pulled up to the fire. Had they been up all night? or were they going a journey?

The weather was frightful, but the sick man was wonderfully changed. Alert and composed, though very serious, he seemed to have undergone a transfiguration. His step was firm and regular, and his carriage that of a man who respects himself and has nothing to fear; and yet, an occasional shadow drifted over his fine countenance, and a slight trembling about the mouth showed that he was still carrying on a war within, and was not always master of himself.

"How much better you look to-day," said Mrs. Maynard, taking one of her brother's hands between both of hers, and looking into his eyes with an expression of thankfulness and triumph, and perhaps of allowable pride; for he was a brother to be proud of, notwithstanding his late hallucination.

"Do I, sister?"

"And you must feel better, stronger, and more self-reliant, I am sure."

"Self-reliant, I hope, sister, though not in my own strength. Do you know that I feel ashamed and terror-stricken, humbled to the very dust, my dear Elizabeth, when I think of my deplorable condition, both of body and mind, for the last two or three months?"

"Don't think of it, brother, it will do you no good; but rouse

yourself, and be the man you were, the Christian you were, before you broke down so terribly and so suddenly, just when you most needed all your strength of body and soul; — but why do you shake your head, brother?"

"I have been, I fear, but a wretched Christian, a presumptuous Christian, Elizabeth. I had not been tried; and the moment I was tried, my heart failed me, and I gave up."

"So was it with Peter."

"Even so, and then he cried 'Help, Lord, or I perish!' I now understand, *now* that I am so entirely dissatisfied with myself and with my past life, how thankful he must have felt, when his eyes were opened of a truth."

"And your voice, too, it sounds no longer like that of one who does not wish to be overheard; a sort of moaning in your sleep, which we were afraid to question oftentimes, when you were not understood, lest we should trouble you. And that slow dragging step, as you crawled up the stairs holding on by the balusters, and along the passage-way, leaning so heavily upon Jerry or Arthur; how unlike your step and bearing now!"

"Yes, and if you knew all, dear Elizabeth, you would be still more astonished. Though I find my business affairs much worse than I ever feared, and growing worse and worse every day, yet I have no longer that sudden sinking of the heart, with a trembling all over, which I had a month ago, nor the hot flashes about my loins, and up my back, nor the drenching perspiration without notice, and coming upon me by surprise, whatever I may be doing or saying; nor that disposition to wander in my speech, as I often did with you, and in the presence of the dear children, who did not see that I was gloomy and silent from sheer unwillingness to be questioned, and not from any change of feeling toward them."

"I see it all, brother, and my heart is overflowing with thankfulness and joy."

"And what is more, Elizabeth, I have no longer that continual sense of an overshadowing, near, and fast approaching calamity, — a sort of unbidden presence about to become visible, when I should be least prepared for it. I know the worst, I be-

lieve, now; and with God's help, I mean to grapple with it, and never again withdraw my trust in Him."

"There spoke my brother!"

The conversation held on, till preparations were made for breakfast, and Arthur and Julia appeared, — as if each had been waiting for the other, — so that poor Julia blushed when her aunt looked up, and Uncle George smiled, as they entered the room together.

On the little stand, the large Bible was lying open, as if the brother and sister had been reading together; and there were letters lying about on another table, and the morning papers, with a work-basket, and a large number of cards and perfumed notes.

Julia took up the first that fell in her way, and after running over the note, called Arthur's attention to the card. "The Century Ball!" said she; "why, what is the meaning of that, Arthur?"

"O, that's an old story! That card has been here a month or two; and here is another I have just lighted on, for the 'Artists' Reception,' — both well worth seeing, I am told, — the Century Ball especially. It is a great distinction to be invited, if you wear a hat, they say."

"If you wear a hat, Arthur? I do not understand you," said Julia, in a whisper across the table.

"I dare say not; and so, if you please, I will try to explain. The members are limited to one hundred; so that, although women are invited, men are not, unless they are strangers, and on the whole rather distinguished; and Uncle George may consider it a compliment worth acknowledging hereafter, when the President, who was our late Minister at the Hague, you know, comes in his way."

"Certainly."

"It is said to be, on the whole, the most magnificent affair of the season, Julia; and I do really wish you had been able to go."

"I dare say," said his mother, who had been watching and listening, "and you would not have been very sorry perhaps, if brother had been able to go with her, instead of keeping his bed?"

"Not very sorry, dear mother, I assure you."

"And the Artists' Reception, — what did you say that was?"

"Another pleasant affair, I am told, where the painters of New York, — Darley, Ehninger, and some fifty other fine fellows of their cloth, being unmarried most of them, — score off the invitations of the past year, by giving a sort of private exhibition at their rooms to the fashionable women of the season, whether married or unmarried."

"A sort of bachelor's ball, then; I have heard of it in other days," added Mrs. Maynard.

"No, mother; if I do not mistake, the Bachelor's Ball comes up at another season; but however that may be, I am quite sure that any one of the score, to which we have been so frequently invited, would be well worth seeing; the women so beautiful, the arrangements so out of the common way, and so sumptuous, and the music and the refreshments, and everything, 'so regardless of expense.'"

"And all this," added the Major, with a look of sorrow, "all this, when we are in the midst of a national bankruptcy, and there are thousands of poor wandering about our streets, and literally starving and freezing. Not a paper can I take up, without finding some terrible case of outrage or suffering; and yet the opera is in full blast, all the theatres, the Academy of Music, the picture-galleries, the exhibitions, and all these magnificent balls."

"And the prayer-meetings, Uncle George; don't forget the prayer-meetings."

"No, Arthur; nor the charity balls, nor the schools, nor the Five Points, nor the House of Industry there."

"The Five Points, Uncle George?"

"The Mission School at the Five Points, I mean; that wondrous charity, where communities are trained to usefulness and virtue, through the help of beggars and outcasts, and little children are made missionaries of, by that Mr. Pease, without knowing it."

"Ah, what have we here?" exclaimed Arthur, as his eye fell upon a paragraph in the paper he had just taken up in a fit of absence, while preparing a reply for his uncle.

"What is it, Arthur?"

"'The mystery cleared up!'" said Arthur, reading from the paper: — "'Our readers will remember that not long ago there was a report from over sea of a most alarming nature, as to a new and very ingenious process of counterfeiting. It was generally believed for a time, though the story died away at last, and was forgotten, or smothered, perhaps, and hushed up, that a very large amount of Bank of England notes ——'"

Julia happened to glance at her uncle, and a cry of terror would have escaped her, but for something in his manner, that alarmed her, even more than what Arthur was reading.

"'A very large amount of Bank of England notes, millions it was then whispered, had been so perfectly imitated, as to deceive the most careful and experienced bankers. The Continent was flooded with them, and the bank had sent agents all over Europe, and even to this country ——'"

Julia was afraid to look up, as he continued, —

"'But no clue was obtained, though the combination was believed to extend all over the business-world, until this morning, just before we went to press, when a beggar-boy who had picked up in Broadway, near the Metropolitan, the burnt fragments of no less than three different ten-pound notes of the Bank of England, and a twenty, sticking together, as if they were part of a large number, all twisted like a wisp of straw, and burned at the same time, handed them to a detective. Upon a hurried and brief comparison with a microscope, it was found that they differed from the genuine, by marks corresponding with those mentioned in the report above referred to. On the whole, therefore, it would seem that our detectives are in the way of a new and startling triumph; and that some of the best may be wanted over sea. It is certainly to be desired, that, if there is any truth in the story, it should all come out; for, if Bank of England notes are discredited, or if they can be so counterfeited as to deceive the knowing ones, there is an end to the paper currency of the British Empire. Nothing but specie or government bills, or bills of exchange, will be allowed to pass.'"

"How very strange!" exclaimed Arthur. "How wonderful! but no, no, it cannot be true; Uncle George, can it?"

"Substantially true, perhaps, though of course greatly exaggerated, as all newspaper stories are," said his uncle, without a change of look or voice.

Julia breathed more freely; but on stealing a glance at her uncle, her heart died away within her; and she wanted to leave the room before another word was spoken, and go somewhere, — she cared not where, — so that no eye should be able to see the changes of her own countenance.

But neither Mrs. Maynard nor Arthur seemed to be at all disturbed.

"Where were they found, Arthur?"

"It does not say, — O yes — in Broadway, near the Metropolitan. How very strange, to be sure; with a foot of snow on the ground — sleet and rain falling — and thousands of people hurrying through this great, over-crowded thoroughfare, night and day almost, and long before day, I am sure, even in such weather. What could possess the parties to burn them in the street, and throw them down, all twisted together, and leave them blazing, perhaps, and only half consumed? If they were led to the work by misgivings, or by the 'compunctious visitings' of conscience, it seems utterly inconceivable how they should have done it up so carelessly, — don't you think so, Uncle George?"

Uncle George nodded; and Julia's heart stopped beating, as he added, —

"There's a providence in all these things, Arthur. Our sins will find us out, sooner or later. Our excessive caution will sometimes betray us, while a happy boldness and instantaneous action may carry us through safely."

"'The wicked flee when no man pursueth,'" said Mrs. Maynard, moving up to the table, which was now spread for breakfast, "and a falling leaf may scare a murderer to confession; but I agree with you, my son, about the strangeness of the discovery, — whether millions be involved in it, or otherwise, — and I do hope that we shall have the matter explained; for in these times, if Bank of England notes are to be picked up in the streets, half consumed, and then found to be forgeries, it would imply great abundance of the article, if nothing more."

"My notion is," continued her brother, with the same quiet

voice, and untroubled serenity of look, "that these notes were never set fire to in the street, and thrown away half consumed,—unless, to be sure, some desperate fellow, who knew their worthlessness and had grown tired of carrying them, had stopped to light a cigar, without well knowing what he did,—or perhaps being a gambler, or something worse, he might be afraid of a search, if he should be entrapped by the police,—or," looking poor Julia straight in the face, who sat watching him, with lips apart, and eyes full of amazement, wondering what he would say next, "or it may be,—and this to me seems the more likely, I confess,—it may be that these were thrown into the fire, and carried up chimney, by the strong wind that prevailed last night. I have known such things to happen."

Julia gasped for breath.

"At the time of the great fire in 1837, a wealthy merchant on Long Island was first informed of the destruction of his warehouses in the city, by the fragment of a leaf which he picked up, and remembered having referred to, in a book which he himself had put away, on leaving his desk, the very afternoon before."

"Coffee, or chocolate, brother? or would you not prefer a cup of honest, old-fashioned black tea?"

"Thank you, sister—I think I should—for a good cup of tea—not the English breakfast tea, if you please; I cannot bear that anyhow; but what you call the honest, old-fashioned black tea, has a very pleasant effect on my nerves, whether I take it with my breakfast, or cold, with a biscuit, for lunch. You smile to hear a man of my size talk about sipping his cold tea, and acknowledging the pleasant influence upon his nerves; but I assure you, sister, that I always find it soothing and tranquillizing; and there is nothing so refreshes me, when I am on a voyage, or travelling anywhere, as a cup of old-fashioned, honest black tea—such as we get in Russia, for example, brought overland from China, and full of the aroma, and strong with the unchanged, wholesome flavor of the plant, which is always more or less injured by a sea-voyage."

"You are enthusiastic, brother; but as we are not in Russia, and I do not well know where to find a tea that has not been

through a sea-voyage, perhaps you may allow this to serve your turn, till we can do better."

"Perhaps I may, sister; and perhaps my nephew here may be willing to try a wee drop with me?"

"No, no, — excuse me," said Arthur, laughing. "I abominate all such contrivances."

"And call them slops, I believe," said Julia.

"And slops they are; and slops they must ever be, to people who have such a repugnance for them as I have."

"Not so fast, young man," said Uncle George, with a slight seriousness which set Julia thinking. "It does not by any means follow that a repugnance, however strong, may not be overcome."

"Indeed!"

"Yes, Arthur, indeed! How is it with tobacco — how with strong drink? How with many articles of food, which at first are received with abhorrence and loathing, and yet, after a while, become so necessary to us, that we are uncomfortable, if not unhappy, or, like the opium-eater, find life itself a burden, where the abused appetite hankers for a new supply?"

"Very true, Sir, but ——"

"One moment, if you please. Our natural appetites forsake us; we grow tired of sweetmeats and confectionery, as we grow older; and the worst habits we have, and the hardest to be overcome, are those which we have acquired; as for tobacco and alcohol, and narcotics in every shape, and curry, and cayenne pepper, and live cheese, or the rancid oil they gloat over in South America."

"And may it not be so, brother, with the habits of the mind? What we once loathed, if we overcome our loathing, may become a settled, perhaps unchangeable desire."

"We first pity, then approve — sometimes — not always, but sometimes, I mean," faltered Julia. "I am sure it has been so with me."

"Yes; we tolerate, and then endure," said Uncle George, "till the monster becomes a bantling."

"And what then, brother?"

"Why then, with self-upbraiding" — impressively — "and large endeavor, with bumble trust and patient waiting, if we

persevere to the end, the bantling becomes a monster once more, and we go on our way leaping for joy, like Sinbad the Sailor, after he had got rid of the old man of the mountain."

"Or the cripples that were healed by our Saviour," added Arthur.

"And so you do seriously think," said Julia, beginning to breathe more freely, "that there is great virtue in tea, Uncle George?"

"So great, my dear Julia, that if I were allowed to ask but one question as to the character of a young man about to offer himself to you ——"

What made Julia blush so?

"Or to a child of my own, I would ask if he were fond of tea."

"*Why!* brother George!"

"Very true, Elizabeth; but I mean just what I say. Of course I should like to know all I could about his health, temper, character, and habits, and should be sorry to find myself confined to a single question; yet, supposing it were so, instead of asking if he was good-tempered, honest, or high-principled, I should ask, is he fond of tea?"

"And why, if you please, brother?"

"Well, in the first place, if he were fond of tea, he could not be very fond of anything stronger."

"Very good! I like that," said Arthur.

"And in the next place, if he were fond of tea, I should know that he was fond of home, of household comforts, of social enjoyment, and the society of virtuous women."

"Capital!" said Arthur; but the laugh that accompanied the remark was anything but natural. "And what say *you* to the proposition, Julia?"

"I should say, Cousin Arthur," answered Julia, with the least possible embarrassment, and a slight flush over neck and temples, — "I should say that, so far as I can judge, there seems to be a great deal of truth in Uncle George's theory; though, if a sister of mine were proposed for, and I were allowed to ask but one single question, I have an idea that — excuse me, Uncle George — that it would be something a little different from yours."

"And what would it be, Julia? I long to know," said Mrs. Maynard.

"So do I," said her uncle.

"And so do I," added Arthur, growing somewhat uneasy, though he tried to carry it off with a laugh; "come, come, Julia, out with it!"

"Well, then, if you insist."

"We do, — we do!"

"I would ask," said Julia, dropping her lashes, and hesitating a moment, as if to make sure of herself before she opened her mouth, — "I would ask if he was a truly religious man."

Arthur looked abashed; his mother, delighted; but Uncle George thought proper to shake his head rather doubtfully.

"I do not know, dear Julia, but you would be safer with that question," said he, at last; "if the man were *truly* religious, though even then he might be morose, or shy, and far from being fond of the society one always finds at the tea-table, and therefore he might be no comfortable companion for life; while, even if he were not a religious man at first, if he loved home and the society of such women as love tea, I should expect him to yield more and more to such domestic influences, until he became religious; or if not religious in the higher meaning of the word, at least an amiable, conscientious, and trustworthy companion. But suppose the answer should be in the negative, Julia; what then?"

"Just what I wanted to know," said Arthur, with a slight trembling of the voice, and a look, not of mere curiosity, but of downright uneasiness and pique.

"I hardly know," said Julia, glancing at her aunt; "I am almost afraid to answer."

"Afraid of committing yourself, perhaps?"

Julia smiled; but her face flushed to the temples.

"No, not exactly, Cousin Arthur; but I am afraid that if a man, otherwise unexceptionable, — and a tea-drinker, Uncle George, — were to be refused upon the ground that he was not a truly religious man, it might, — it might, — a — a ——"

"Go far to discourage him, hey?" said Arthur, somewhat maliciously.

"Yes, Arthur; and I think few young women could answer for themselves in advance. They might see their duty clearly; but, hoping for the best, and perhaps finding much to love, and more to hope for, in the character of the young man, — I am afraid that most women, — young women, I mean, — would be likely to shut their eyes to the danger, and hazard everything upon the hope."

Arthur wanted to say, "And would you do this, dear Julia, — would you?" but his heart failed him; and obeying a signal from his mother, he pushed the open Bible toward her, and turned away his face, and sat listening to what followed, without appearing to understand a word of it, until the chapter was nearly finished.

"Brother, will you read?"

"Not this morning, sister, if you please; in fact, I would rather you should take that upon yourself, as you used to do, when Harper was alive; and I will continue to ask the blessing, as usual, and offer a word of prayer after you get through."

Mrs. Maynard began reading from Luke xxii., as it lay open before her. Was it by design?

Arthur grew more and more attentive.

"Mother," said he, after she had finished, "please read that portion of the chapter again, where the Saviour speaks of praying for Peter, 'that his faith fail not,' and of his conversion; it troubles me, I cannot understand it."

His mother read as follows from verse 32: "But I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not; and when thou art *converted*, strengthen thy brethren."

"How very strange!" said Arthur, in a low voice, and with a reverent air, looking first at Julia and his mother, and then at his uncle, who sat leaning on his elbow with one hand over his eyes. "If up to that hour, notwithstanding all that Peter had gone through with, and all he had suffered and witnessed, and all that had been promised him by the Saviour, he was not a converted man, I do not wonder that others are troubled about the meaning of conversion."

A dead silence followed, and then a very serious and protracted discussion; Arthur desiring to understand from his mother

and Uncle George whether, in fact, the apostle ever was converted, according to their views; and if so, when?

"Perhaps, dear aunt," said Julia at last, fixing her eyes on Arthur, with a trembling earnestness that changed the whole character of her large dreaming eyes, mild, passionless, and beautiful, and far-seeing, as if into the spirit-land, — "perhaps Cousin Arthur may be able to find a satisfactory answer to a part of his questions at least, by reading the account of that last interview, where the inquiry '*Lovest* thou me, Simon Peter?' is three times repeated; and the apostle answers, 'Yea, Lord, thou *knowest* that I love thee.'"

"Certainly, it was then, if ever," exclaimed Arthur, with flashing eyes, and a look of eager and almost passionate admiration.

"Although, in one sense, the beginning of conversion may be instantaneous, dear Arthur, as in all the cases to be found here," said his mother, laying her hand upon the Gospel, "it is never completed, perhaps, till we have finished our course on earth; — but I am a little afraid of these discussions."

"You misunderstand me, dear mother, if you think I am disputing for the pleasure of disputing; I desire to see for myself; and I think I do see somewhat more clearly."

"God strengthen you, my child."

Another long and thoughtful stillness followed, which Arthur ended, by pulling out his watch, and comparing it with the clock.

"If you are going out, nephew, don't forget our engagement, I beg of you. We must have you here."

"At twelve, Sir?" growing a little uneasy and looking sideways at his mother, who shook her head in reply.

"And we had an engagement, also," said she, "and hoped you might be able to go with us to-day, brother."

"At what hour?"

"Either at twelve or three; and perhaps Julia might manage to go with us."

"My arrangements are all made, sister, for winding up that troublesome business with Miss Wentworth. She will be here at twelve with her lawyer, and I must have Arthur for a witness. My solicitor will be here; and that job over, I shall begin to breathe more freely."

"With all my heart, Uncle George. Business before pleasure," said Arthur.

"But where do you propose to go, sister?"

Mrs. Maynard looked at Julia, and then at Arthur, and then said, "I want very much to look into one of these prayer-meetings."

"Indeed!"

"Yes, brother. I have heard so much of them; of their solemnity and heartiness, and of the wonderful answers to prayer they have had, as acknowledged by the secular papers; conversions afar off, as well as in our midst. And then, too, the prayers are so short, — only three minutes, at most."

"If you could hear some of these very short prayers, from rough-looking sailors, and middle-aged business men," said Arthur, "I do believe you would look for a speedy answer, and be disappointed sometimes, if it did not soon follow."

"There is something very strange, something awful, in this outbreak over land and sea," said Uncle George. "In the North of Europe, in the Sandwich Isles, in the East, and all over our country, it burst forth in hundreds of places at once, like prairie-fires, or spontaneous combustion; and just where the churches had been doing the least, or nothing at all, perhaps, — and sometimes where they had given up in despair. And then, too, although there are denominational or sectarian prayer-meetings, they are always thin and lifeless, while the *union* meetings are crowded to suffocation, morning, noon, and night, and always glowing."

"Yes, Uncle George; and I have seen with my own eyes, Presbyterians, Quakers, Baptists, Jews, and Methodists, and scores of desperate men, who, but a little time before, had been the terror of Philadelphia, all praying together, and all in earnest, brief, and to the purpose; with a huge placard staring them in the face, on which was printed in letters a foot long, 'Three minutes only! . . . . No person allowed to pray and exhort, or to speak twice!'"

"It would seem," added his mother, "from what is acknowledged by the papers which do not claim to be religious, but merely business-papers, as if just when the churches were about

giving up, the heavens had opened, and a voice had come to the people, and to the captains of the host, saying, 'Stand still! and see the salvation of the Lord!'"

"There is something, too, in these very short prayers, and brief exhortations, which seems to astonish everybody. They are sometimes asked for in person, with a '*Pray for me!*' and sometimes for another. I never felt so in all my life, as I have, more than once, at the Fulton Street meeting, when I had dropped in for a moment, merely out of curiosity, — nothing more, mother; I wouldn't have you misunderstand me."

"It is the difference, after all," added the Major, with impressive solemnity, "between thousands praying for one, or *with* one, and one praying for thousands, or perhaps for the whole human race, which is one of the leading characteristics of *lengthy* prayers, whether in the pulpit, or out."

"So that, if there be any efficacy in prayer," interrupted Arthur, somewhat eagerly, as the idea struck him, "it is a matter of the clearest mathematical demonstration, you see, that the prayers of a thousand for one must be a million times more efficient — other circumstances being equal — than the prayers of one for a thousand."

His mother turned toward him with a startled expression; and so did Julia, and so did Uncle George; but they saw in his look only the signs of good faith, and a very uncommon seriousness.

"Yes, Arthur, I go for short prayers. Ours are always short, you know; short, comprehensive, and to the purpose, like that given to us for a model by our Saviour, when he said, 'After this *manner*, pray ye.'"

"But the Saviour made very long prayers, too, — long, when compared with that, as we find in John, though short in comparison with ours; and it may be that he sometimes passed the whole night in prayer."

"Once, Arthur, if no more. But I must acknowledge that some of these very short prayers which I have heard from the rough-looking, earnest men about me, where the men of business make a business of prayer, have made me feel as I never felt before, and set me thinking, as for my life."

"To me, Uncle George, they are like minute-guns at sea, heard through the roaring darkness; or the tolling of a midnight bell. We know, when we hear such a sound, that somebody is in danger, *and knows it*, — foundering perhaps, or drifting upon the rocks — or on his way to the grave. They are signals of distress, which are never misunderstood, nor undervalued, nor slighted."

"So that minute-guns at sea are of themselves a sort of prayer, — prayers for sympathy and help?" said Julia.

"Yes, Julia; and what is more, it is not so much the loud alarum of many bells, or the uninterrupted roar of a cannonade, — one telling of a great battle perhaps, and another of a great fire, — as it is the heavy tolling of one bell, or the noise of one great solitary gun, at dead of night, which troubles the heart of man, with a desire to cast himself down headlong from the dizziest places of earth, and cry aloud for help."

At this moment, Arthur observed his uncle's eye wandering over the paper from which he had been reading the paragraph aloud, just before breakfast. "You will find it there, Sir," said he, pointing.

Uncle George took up the paper, with such a look of careless unconcern, that Julia determined to profit by his example, if a proper occasion should arise.

And well it was that she did so determine, and that she was in a measure prepared; for the next moment, Arthur, turning towards her, said, —

"By the way, Julia, you had better hand those Bank of England notes I saw you with, not long ago, to Uncle George, and let him satisfy himself about them, before they get you into a scrape. It is barely possible, you know, if the story we see here has any truth in it, that you may have been caught."

Poor girl! she hardly knew which way to look; but she was instantly relieved by Uncle George, who asked if she had any of them left.

"No," she answered, "not one."

"And you received them all from me, I believe; did you not?"

"Certainly."

"O," said Arthur, "that settles the question. Uncle George is not a man to be caught with forged paper on the Bank of England, I promise you. He has lived too long where it would be a matter of life and death;" and saying this, he jumped up and walked to the window, whistling a new opera air as he went. On looking out, he saw a carriage draw up, and after waiting a few moments, he added, —

"Here they are! And, as I live, that charming Aunt Marie, and the coquettish Sallie, and Miss Hattie."

"Punctual to the moment," said Uncle George, pulling out his watch; "though I hardly expected to see the whole family."

A slight rap — the door opened — and after a few words of inquiry, ending with "Show them up, if you please," three superbly dressed women appeared, followed by a man of business, and a gray-haired lawyer, with a large gold-headed cane swinging from his wrist, and a pair of gold spectacles just ready to drop from the end of his nose.

"Be seated, ladies; and you, my dear Sir," said the Major, "if you will be so obliging as to draw up to the table," spreading some papers before the gold spectacles for bait, "you may find it more convenient for the transaction of our little business. I am only waiting for my solicitor, Mr. Winchester, — ah! there he is now! Good morning, Mr. Winchester; take a seat by me, if you please. Arthur, we shall want you for a few minutes."

Introductions followed all round, to the rustling of silks, and the shuffling of feet, and the noise and flutter of pocket-handkerchiefs; and just when poor Miss Wentworth, (Aunt Marie,) was beginning to grow dreadfully nervous, Uncle George turned toward her with an air of gentle seriousness, and said very slowly, and with great dignity and self-possession, —

"My dear Madam, I have no desire to hurt your feelings; nor do I mean to reproach you for what you have thought proper to say of me ——"

The poor woman tried to speak, but her heart was too full; and she turned toward the fire, then to Julia, and then to her man of business, with such a look of distress!

"I have invited you here, with your friends and legal advisers, for a better purpose, I trust; and while I hope to vindicate my-

self, I say again, that I have no desire to hurt your feelings. Are the papers all ready, Mr. Winchester?"

"All, Sir."

"Have you shown them to Mr. Pilsbury?"

Mr. Pilsbury and the gold spectacles bowed.

"And are you perfectly satisfied with the transaction, as it now stands?"

"Why, as to that, Sir," said Mr. Pilsbury, with a snuffle, "and looking upon it in a *legal* view, — I beg you will not interrupt me, Madam," — this he said to Aunt Marie, who had been fidgeting and making signs to him for several minutes, and had now managed to get her toe upon the foot nearest her, — "in a *legal* view, it must be acknowledged, that you have done all that we could properly require of you; and I must say, notwithstanding the ruinous result for my unhappy client," — here Aunt Marie took out her pocket-handkerchief with a flourish, and poor Sallie sobbed outright, and Miss Hattie stared, — "for my unhappy client, Sir, who is unmarried, as you undoubtedly know, and without children," — a slight giggle from behind the handkerchief Miss Sallie held to her eyes, — "that is to say — excuse me — what may be called a lone woman, or single woman, or what by the English law is called a spinster ——"

"A *spinster!*" muttered Aunt Marie, with an impatient fling, though without withdrawing the handkerchief.

"A *spinster!*" repeated Miss Sallie, flinging the perfume far and wide, with a flourish not to be mistaken, and smiling through her tears, first at Julia, where she met with no encouragement, and then at Arthur, who wanted very much to steal away, where he could have a good hearty laugh, all by himself.

"And, Sir," continued Mr. Pilsbury, after the fashion of your elderly gentlemen who wear powder and gold spectacles, and are what are called learned in the law, with a high character in the Court of Appeals, — men who are almost always too deep to be understood by the *lay gens*, — "I feel it my duty to say, notwithstanding the very serious charges made by my client, Miss Wentworth, who wishes me to say for her, and she is here to confirm what I say, that she exceedingly regrets having made those charges in the way she did ——"

"That I do, indeed, Sir!" said Aunt Marie. "I am heartily ashamed of myself! I ought to have known better, — I did know better, Mr. Pendleton; but oh, if you knew what sleepless nights I have passed, and what dreadful days, and what dismal forebodings I have had, and what a —— "

"If you please, Madam," said Mr. Pilsbury, without the slightest change of look or manner, "what I wanted to say, in short, Sir, was, that from the beginning to the end of these negotiations, your behavior has been strictly *legal*, Sir."

"*Legal*, Sir?"

"*Honorable*, I mean, Sir."

"O, that's another affair; I am perfectly satisfied, then," said Uncle George, rising from the chair, and taking up a sealed instrument, and some other papers of a portentous magnitude. "So that," he continued, "the conveyance of the house being completed, the stocks transferred, and the deeds passed, the property is mine, absolutely mine; and not only legally, Sir, if I understand you, but *honorably*; so that Miss Wentworth has nothing to complain of?"

"Precisely."

"Very well, Sir. And you have the certificates of stock all here, as I requested; in other words, what you call the consideration I paid for the house?"

Mr. Pilsbury bowed.

"Then, Sir, — allow me to say, there is a deed to you, Madam, duly executed," — going up to Aunt Marie, and putting a paper into her hand, with a low bow; and then turning to Mr. Pilsbury, who telegraphed the man of business in such a way, as to set him fumbling over the papers, like a terrier after a rat, "allow me to say that if Miss Wentworth will be so obliging as to transfer the stock to Mr. Winchester, in trust for me, and you will undertake to indemnify me for the outlays upon the house, after we get the bills in ——"

"Certainly, Sir! most certainly!" said Miss Wentworth, foreseeing the result, perhaps, and gasping for breath, while tears of transport ran down her cheeks, and she seemed almost ready to throw herself at his feet.

"In that case," continued Uncle George, after a short pause,

and looking about, as if to be sure that he was understood by all, "I give up the bargain forever; and will bear the subsequent depreciation of the stock myself."

There was a dead silence for several minutes; and then the sound of sobbing—"God forgive me!" and "God bless you!"—so that even gold spectacles thought proper to wipe his eyes, and then to use a large red pocket-handkerchief, with considerable emphasis; adding with a snuffle, "that he would take it upon himself to say, that no advantage should be taken of the delivery of the deed before the consideration was paid; though for his part, he must be allowed to suggest, that all business ought to be done according to law; law being the perfection of reason."

"My noble brother!" said Mrs. Maynard, at last.

"My dear, *dear* uncle!" said Julia, jumping about his neck, and not quite understanding what had been done; but sure, from the signs about her, that something beautiful and grand in the judgment of others who did know, must have happened, she was ready to cry out for joy, "O, my dear uncle!"

And here the business of the day being over—the house given up—and a large amount of troublesome and wicked misrepresentation silenced forever, and so answered, as to leave nothing more to be done for the vindication of Mr. Pendleton's character, as one of the most truly generous and honorable men living, the two parties separated, better friends than ever.

"Now, dear Arthur, we may release you," said his mother.

"Until four, if you please then; we are too late for the first meeting; but before I go, one word with you, uncle. I do not well understand these matters of business; but if I am right, you bought the house of a law-agent, and paid for it in the stock of the Illinois Central Railroad Company. Am I right?"

"Yes, Arthur."

"And after the title had passed, and the stock had been transferred at the price agreed upon, it fell suddenly, and most unaccountably, to a price never before heard of."

"Even so."

"And then the poor thing took it into her head that you knew the stock was about becoming worthless, and thought proper to call the transaction a *swindle*? You start, Sir; but I had a bit

of a quarrel on your account, when I first heard the story, and for that reason, did not much like to inquire into the business."

"And yet, Arthur, if you had done so," said Mr. Pendleton, rather sadly, "it would have been worthier of you, and worthier of me."

"How so, Uncle George?"

"It would have shown — far better than your silence, and far better than a quarrel — that you had no belief in the story, and were not afraid to question me."

Arthur felt abashed. "I had no belief in the story, dear uncle; I knew there was not a word of truth in it; I am sure you will believe me; but still I must acknowledge it would have been wiser and better, had I gone directly to you for the circumstances."

"Undoubtedly," said his mother.

"But the truth was, my good uncle, I had been in so many scrapes to be ashamed of, that I was unwilling to be questioned about this."

"Arthur Maynard — beware of appearances! You have had a quarrel upon your hands, of a very serious nature, — I knew it all within forty-eight hours after it happened; but I durst not explain myself to anybody at that time, so much against me were appearances."

"Appearances! Who cares for appearances?"

"Arthur Maynard! So far as the judgment of this world goes, appearances are everything. What is character itself but appearance? Only He who can read the heart of man — who sees the end from the beginning — can venture to overlook appearances."

Arthur grew very serious.

"And in this particular case, my dear nephew, although you are so thoroughly satisfied that there was not a word of truth in the story, and were ready to peril your life on my character, yet, that you may be wiser and more cautious hereafter, allow me to say to you now, and here, in the presence of your mother and cousin, for I would have what I say make a deep and lasting impression upon you, that there really was some truth in it."

"Some truth in the story, Uncle George?"

"Or rather, some foundation for the report. I was lately from England, you will please to remember, and it was conjectured that, as I was rather a large holder, I must know the real condition of that great railroad company, with its forty millions of capital; that I foresaw the assignment, which took place immediately after I sold so largely; and that I knew, moreover, all about the disputed titles at Chicago, which involved a million or two of property we had paid for, — and worse yet, perhaps, that I foresaw the question likely to arise between the Cairo City proprietors and the railroad company, about the defences of Cairo, which might cost millions of outlay. And therefore, as you must acknowledge, there was at least something to make the story out of."

"And so, to satisfy all parties, and vindicate yourself, Uncle George, you have thrown up the house you had actually paid for in the Illinois Central stock, at the fair market-value, and taken the stock back again, after a prodigious depreciation. Well! I must say — you'll excuse me, dear mother — but I would see them all hanged first."

"Arthur!"

"And now you are to suffer in every way. All your plans defeated; all your purposes for mother and Julia disappointed; and the stock worthless, and growing worse and worse every day."

"Not so fast, Arthur. Although an assignment has been made by the company, for the benefit of their creditors, and they cannot even pay the interest on the bonds, yet the stock will come up, and the bonds may be among the best in the market, before a twelvemonth is over."

"And you believe this, Uncle George!"

"Yes, Arthur; I not only *hope* this, but I believe it."

"Hurrah!"

"Are you mad, Arthur?"

"Almost, dear mother. Hurrah!"

"Quite, I should say," whispered Julia.

"And how about the Cairo stock, — in for a penny, in for a pound, you know. And having some interest there, I should like to know what you think of that?"

"So well, dear Arthur, that I mean to keep all I have, and buy up all I can — after this flurry is over — unless it should go up to something near its value."

"Really."

"Yes, really. That stock is all paid for. The shareholders cannot be assessed, nor made liable in any way. There are millions of property belonging to the association, and constantly increasing in value; and every share represents, according to actual sales, considerably more than four hundred dollars."

"Hurrah! I am satisfied; good morning, all!" and away he sprang through the half-open door, as if a new world had been opened to him.

CHAPTER IX.

Poor Julia! Another long sleepless night, and for the first time in all her life, she was haunted, not only with the vague dismal forebodings of which Aunt Marie and Uncle George complained, but with an overshadowing terror, a superstitious fear, as if something terrible were about to happen.

Hour after hour, she lay awake, listening to the hail upon the windows, to the noise of the wind and rattling sleet, and trying to reason away the phantoms, huge and shapeless, that seemed to be crowding the room and looking into her eyes through the darkness. Whenever she lost herself for a moment, poor Charles would pass like a spirit before her, pale, haggard, and speechless; and when she started up to scare the vision away, the last she remembered was always a sad and reproachful look; so that she was afraid to sleep, lest she might dream, or, if she woke suddenly, be still more frightened.

When fully awake, the weariness and heaviness grew insupportable; she became restless, and kept shifting about from side to side, now wishing for day, and now shutting her eyes, and covering them with her hands, or hiding her face in the pillows with a consciousness that daybreak had come, and that she would not be able much longer to conceal the fact from herself, however unwelcome it might be. Thoughts of her uncle, and of his coolness, quickness, and self-possession the day before, when Arthur read the paragraph at the breakfast-table about the Bank of England notes, began to trouble her. He no longer appeared uneasy; and yet, if she could judge, the danger was thickening every hour; and though he had offered no explanation to her, and it was clear that neither Mrs. Maynard nor Arthur knew anything of the trouble, there seemed to be something very strange, if not sus-

picious, in the circumstances. And then followed another flash of thought; and she started, broad awake, as it came, rushing through the troubled darkness into a chamber of her heart hitherto unvisited, — a chamber where she had enshrined her Uncle George as a being almost godlike in his lofty nature, as a sort of guardian who, whatever might be the weaknesses of other men, had always appeared to be above and beyond the temptations that mislead. But within a few weeks, had she not found him losing all faith in himself, and giving up under the pressure of calamity, like the merest worldling? And though, to be sure, he had got over the dreadful prostration that so frightened them, very suddenly, and with a single effort, as it were, still her aunt must have meant something, when she read that chapter in the Bible where the Saviour says to Peter, "When thou art *converted*, strengthen thy brethren." Could it be that her beloved uncle — the man she so loved and so revered — had never been truly converted? and if so, what was to be said of his behavior? Could he have been a self-deceiver for twenty years?

More and more troubled, she began to recall a conversation she had with him just before the death of her father. "Julia," said he, "all mankind may be divided into three classes. The first are the self-righteous, who insist upon saving themselves, and want no Saviour. The second are they who are willing enough to be saved, and not willing to depend altogether upon themselves, but who insist on being saved in their own way, according to their notions of what God ought to do. The third are they who surrender themselves altogether to God, giving up all trust in themselves, and only asking to be saved, they care not how. And now," said he, "Julia, to which of these three classes do you belong?" Overwhelmed by the thought, she had hurried away to her chamber, and falling upon her knees, had never slept until she heard the whisper of peace, and was enabled to cast herself into the arms of her earthly father, with a cry of transport, the very day before his death. Could it be that her dear uncle, who had been so faithful and so earnest with her, was himself an outcast, or under a delusion? The idea was insupportable, and she determined to question her aunt, and to watch them both narrowly and constantly.

And then there followed swiftly, like another living shadow, the remembrance of that transaction with Miss Wentworth; so generous, and so unlooked for, by those who did not know him. And yet — God forgive her! — while the poor child's heart was throbbing with the recollection of all that had happened the day before, and she was ready to cry out for joy and thankfulness, and to cast aside all doubt of her dear uncle's true condition, all at once it came over her, that, as in the case of the forged notes, all he had chosen to say might be scrupulously true, and yet — she trembled to think of the possibility, and for a moment she felt ashamed of herself, and shrunk from what she began to believe must be the prompting of an evil spirit, if not of the great Adversary himself, in his unhallowed sifting of the righteous; do what she would to drive it away, shut her eyes and cover them with her clasped hands, or sit up and face the growing daylight with the fixedness of a marble statue — the thought would keep returning to her, till she shuddered with the discouraging repetition, that while Arthur had been carefully set right with regard to the foundation of the charge made by Miss Wentworth, Uncle George had never denied for a moment the very foreknowledge attributed to him! Why not say at once, and without qualification, that he knew nothing of what afterwards happened; and that the sudden fall in the stocks he had got rid of in such a hurry, so soon after his arrival, was wholly unexpected to him? How much better than to leave all this to inference! And then, too, if he felt so sure that within a twelvemonth, or so, that very stock would be up to par, as he called it, where was the merit of the sacrifice he had appeared to make? Poor Julia, though secretly arraigning that beloved uncle, as a mere stockjobber, and hypocrite, perhaps, who had been playing with their credulity, while carrying out a great and complicated system of circumvention; forgetting all she knew of his former life, all that her father knew of him, and all that others, in whom they had the fullest confidence, knew of him, just as if he were the greatest of strangers, and only known to her, through forged notes and the transfer of stocks to a helpless woman but a day or two before they turned out to be worthless, — not for the world would she have acknowledged it to herself. But when she had reasoned the whole question through,

and saw what she had been doing, hour after hour, in the silent watches of the night, she flung herself back upon the bed, with a cry of terror and self-reproach, and covering her face with the bedclothes, burst into a passionate flood of tears.

"Oh, my dear, dear uncle," she cried, "forgive me! Oh forgive me, or I shall go mad!"

There was no more rest, no possibility of sleep, after this brief questioning of herself; and the moment she heard the step of Bessie, setting the room in order, she left her bed, and shivering from head to foot, with fear partly, and partly with cold, stole away to their warm snug parlor in her morning-wrapper and furred slippers.

On drawing up to the fire, she found the papers of the day lying on the table; and recollecting how they had all been taken by surprise at breakfast, she determined to run her eye over the contents, and see if anything more was to be found about the forged notes, before Mrs. Maynard, who was a very early riser, should appear.

Not a word upon the subject was to be found in any but the Morning Herald; and that was only to the effect that, after diligent search, enough had been discovered to satisfy the Superintendent of Police — poor Julia! — that the notes were indeed most ingenious forgeries, and that they were on the track of a confederate, who had left New York two or three months before, and after going through the Canadas, where he had thrown a large amount into circulation, had gone to Australia or California, it was not certain which. But the train was laid, the detectives were on the alert, and it was hardly possible for any active accomplice in the city to escape.

Poor Julia was quite overcome at first. All her suspicions were now fixed upon her brother; and when she saw the name of the gentleman who knew so much of Charles, and who had some of these very notes in his own possession for a long while before they were destroyed, she began to believe that her dark forebodings in the night-watches, and her dreadful nervousness, were intended for a warning and preparation; or, in other words, that Charles himself had appeared to her, and that her dream was fast coming true.

Leaning her elbows upon the table, and covering her face with

her hands, while the tears trickled through her fingers, the poor child was beginning to think seriously of going up to her uncle's room, and throwing herself at his feet, and beseeching him in mercy to save her poor brother, when, all at once, her broken-hearted inarticulate prayer was answered, not by her uncle, but by her heavenly Father; and she started to her feet with a cry of joy, and fell upon her knees, and sobbed, and sobbed, as if her very heart would break.

How blind! how utterly carried away had she been, by sheer nervousness and a superstitious terror! How entirely had she overlooked what she now remembered so well, and almost regarded as a revelation, — the fact that her brother had allowed these forged notes to come back into her possession without a word of warning; and that Mr. Pendleton himself, by begging her to write her brother and caution him, as he did, proved beyond all question, that so far as he knew or believed, Charles had nothing to do with the forgery.

These two facts were of themselves a demonstration of her brother's innocence; and the burden was lifted, and the cloud rolled away; and while she wondered more and more, the more she thought of these two little circumstances, how it had been possible for her to overlook them, and for so long a time, she felt as if a spirit had passed by, while she was upon her knees, whispering to her troubled heart, "Peace! be still!"

And she was comforted, and happy; so that on catching a glimpse of herself in the mirror, she started at the change she saw there, and the tears came into her eyes afresh, as the blood began to ripple through her veins anew, with a feeling of girlhood, long since forgotten.

But her aunt did not appear; and feeling so very happy and so tranquil, — and so ashamed of herself, too, for the dreadful suspicions she had so long harbored against her poor brother, — she began to review her judgment of Uncle George, and thought, and thought, until she grew frightened at herself, — wondering whether she had been altogether in her right mind, for the last month or two, and especially during the past night. If she had so clearly wronged her brother, whose past life did not furnish the evidence to be found in all that she knew of her uncle, how

much more had she not wronged her uncle! Her own heart condemned her; and she shrank away from herself, abashed and trembling.

But while gazing into the fire, and musing over the past, her attention was attracted by an item of religious intelligence in the paper she held. It was there stated, that letters were coming in from all parts of the country, and from over sea, addressed to the Fulton Street Prayer-Meeting, and asking prayers for one and another; here, from a widow for the conversion of a fashionable daughter; there, from a father for the salvation of a son going abroad; husbands were asking prayers for their wives, and wives for their husbands; and these requests were all entered in a book, and came up in their order, and some of the answers were both immediate and astonishing. People were converted on the sea, and in distant parts of the country, on the very day and hour when these prayers went up for them for the first time, at the Fulton Street meeting. Letters came which had been long on the way; so that friends learned they were prayed for, while their letters were carrying back the news of their conversion. These were facts not to be disputed, account for them as we may.

Julia stopped; if these things were true, what was her duty? "O thou of little faith!" she whispered to herself; and snatching up a pen, she wrote as follows:—

"A believer in prayer asks the prayers of God's people for an only brother in a distant land, that he may be brought to a knowledge of the truth, as it is in Christ Jesus."

This note she sealed, and directing it, in a large, bold hand, to the Fulton Street Prayer-Meeting, as the paper had suggested, rang the bell for Bessie, and sent her to drop it into the penny-post, with her own hands, having satisfied herself that Bessie could not read writing, whatever she might be able to do with large printed shop-signs. Here was additional security against the meddling of waiters and clerks, if it were dropped into the letter-box below. How strange! and yet how common, this dread of ridicule or misapprehension! Though earnest and willing to pray for the salvation of a dear brother, she was not willing to be known as a believer in the Fulton Street prayer-meeting.

After a while, her aunt appeared, and then Arthur, and then, just as they were sitting down to breakfast, Uncle George — with unclouded eyes, and a strong, decided step.

"How well you do look, dear brother!" said Mrs. Maynard. "You must have slept well, — I see it in your eyes, I hear it in your very breathing, I feel it in your step."

"And yet, sister, I have spent the whole night in reviewing my past life, and in drawing up resolutions."

"Indeed!"

"Yes; and though greatly strengthened and refreshed, it has not been with sleep, for I was not sleepy, and never closed my eyes, I believe, till after four; but then, after I dropped away, I did not once hear the clock strike; nor did I start in my sleep, Jerry says, nor mutter, nor roll about, as I have so long been accustomed to do."

"And the resolutions you speak of, — did you satisfy yourself at last?"

"Perfectly. And what is more, my conscience and my judgment approve them, now that I am broad awake — which, I apprehend, is not very common, after a man has been showing off in his sleep, making speeches, or talking poetry, or astonishing his best friends at a dinner-table."

"Perhaps, dear brother ——"

"I understand you, Elizabeth. You would like to know what they were; and as they are very brief, and reduced to writing, and may be a help to others, I will read them to you. The truth is, my dear sister, that we need the shadow quite as much as we do the sunshine here. I have had both, and I am now thankful for both, and have fully made up my mind, God helping me, when my path is overclouded again, and the great sky itself — God's presence-chamber — seems to be covered with thick darkness that can be felt — to remember, — first, how much darker it might be; secondly, how much we always have to be thankful for, happen what may; and, thirdly, how much worse off others are, look where we will."

"Excellent, my brother; and in every way, if remembered at the right moment, and acted upon with a steadfast faith, sure to bring consolation and help."

"And I was rather inclined to say, fourthly," added he, "that, if we recall our past experience, we shall find that our apprehensions of coming evil are almost always much worse than the reality."

"Always, I should think," said Julia, her heart overflowing with a gush of thankfulness, as she thought of her poor brother, and recalled her anxieties about him and Uncle George.

"We do not know, at first, whither to turn, dear brother. We are overwhelmed and powerless when a great calamity approaches without notice, and we are full of exaggerating terrors."

"Just like a beleaguered city; if surrounded at once," added Arthur, "it is pretty sure to be frightened into a surrender; but after a few days, or weeks, or months, it grows so familiar with the roar of cannon, and the rocking of the battlements, that women and children are found looking up the spent balls, carrying powder, taking care of the wounded, or assisting at the defences."

"Thank you, Arthur," said his uncle; "your illustration is very fair."

Julia assented, and she looked at her cousin's illuminated countenance with an expression he had never seen before. He felt abashed; and yet a thrill of joy "went a-rippling to his finger-ends." The mother seemed to be watching both, and to be greatly pleased with what she saw, though a slight shadow — the slightest possible shadow of apprehensiveness — appeared for a moment in the clear depth of her eyes, and then passed away.

At breakfast it was agreed, that, after certain business arrangements which had been prepared were over, they would all go together to the Fulton Street prayer-meeting — all! — but who proposed it nobody ever knew — and there see for themselves, and try to judge for themselves, whether the Lord was there of a truth, or whether a set of wrong-headed enthusiasts, or crazy fanatics, had only given themselves up to a strong delusion. But if they should happen to be satisfied — what then? Would it not be dreadful to find hereafter, as the patriarch did, in other days, that the Lord was there, and they knew it not?

Breakfast over, and the usual morning exercises through, Mr. Pendleton looked at his sister; and when she bowed in reply, he

turned toward Arthur and Julia, and with an affectionate seriousness of manner, which brought tears into their eyes before he had finished, said to them, —

"Dear children, my sister and I have come to a settled conclusion at last. Our minds are made up; and now that we know the worst, we feel it our duty to share that knowledge with you, however painful or humiliating."

Julia looked at her aunt, in terror, and then at her uncle, and then at Arthur — wondering what new trial was coming; and Arthur's eyes wandered in sorrowful perplexity from one to another, until his very breathing could be heard by all.

"Are you prepared, think you?" said Mr. Pendleton.

"I am," replied Arthur, lifting his fine head, shaking loose that abundant hair, and heaving his youthful chest, as if charging on horseback, and about to draw the enemy's fire.

Julia bowed — but no sound escaped from her pale trembling lips.

"Bravely said, Arthur! bravely looked, Julia! With God's help, we have nothing to fear, so long as we have the stoutheartedness that comes of our faith in Him. Be not abashed, my dear Arthur; I do not suppose you are now just what you hope to be hereafter."

Arthur shook his head, almost sadly.

"But you have faith in God, I know."

"That have I, dear uncle, or I should not now be in the land of the living."

His mother looked troubled, and Julia somewhat grieved and frightened, with the sad earnestness of Arthur. It was a new revelation to both.

"And," continued his uncle, — "and I am quite sure that you do not mean to die as you are, if you can help it."

"Would I were worthier!" murmured the nephew, moving away from the light as he spoke, and turning his face to the wall.

"Arthur — dear Arthur — this will never do," said his mother, coming up to him, and throwing her arms about his neck, and drawing his head up to her bosom, convulsively. "That sense of unworthiness, my dear boy, is your greatest recommendation — your only recommendation — your only ground of hope."

Arthur sobbed — but refused to be comforted; and when he lifted his head, looked ashamed and sorry.

"The Saviour came to call not the righteous, but sinners to repentance, dear Arthur," whispered Julia.

"And if you abide where you are, till you are worthier," added Uncle George, "what is that but undertaking to save yourself? and when would you be worthier?"

Arthur could bear no more. He sprang from his chair, interchanged a kiss with his mother, and hurried to the window. A dead silence followed, which was only broken at last by Uncle George.

"Well then, dear children," said he, "supposing you to be prepared, let us go back to where we turned off. What say you to leaving this hotel, at once and forever?"

"With all my heart!" said Julia.

"The sooner the better," said Arthur.

"And giving up the carriage, and the coachman, and poor Jerry, and perhaps a chambermaid?"

Arthur and Julia were both silent.

"Well, what say you, dear children?"

"I hardly know what to say," answered Julia, observing that her uncle had his eyes fixed upon her, and seemed to be waiting for her answer; "I am prepared for anything and everything, I hope, which Aunt Elizabeth and you may believe to be necessary. Nor do I even care to know what these arrangements are, nor what your reasons may be. Do what you think best, and I shall be satisfied; and if you are happy, I cannot be otherwise."

"Brava! — just what we have both expected of you, Julia. And what say you, Arthur?"

"Well — as you do not appear to have expected much of me, if anything, I propose to say *ditto* to Cousin Julia."

"Capital! so far, so good. And then — we are coming to it rather slowly, and step by step, as it were — and then, what say you both to leaving New York?"

"Leaving New York, Sir! Nothing would please me more. I am tired to death of New York," said Arthur; "and whether you leave it or not, dear mother, dear uncle, and — Julia," — why did he not say *dear* Julia? Why did he falter and swallow

the word with a gulp? he had never done such a thing before,—"I shall certainly leave it, and I hope, forever, and within a few weeks at furthest; and go somewhere, I care not much where, and try to earn my own living, and build up a character for myself, such as none of you may be ashamed of hereafter."

His mother stood astonished and trembling, as he continued,—

"I have been too long an idler,—worse than poor Esau, I have thrown away my birthright,—for if I had been but willing to tread in the steps of my father, what might I not have been, after a few years of honest manly devotion to business?"

"Dear Arthur!" whispered somebody very near to him.

"Worse than the prodigal; for I have not spent my substance in riotous living, but suffered it to perish, without being of use to anybody."

His mother wiped her eyes.

"Very well, Arthur," said Mr. Pendleton, laying his hand quietly upon the boy's head, as he leaned forward, his shoulders heaving, and his forehead glowing with shame and self-reproach. "Of all these plans we will talk hereafter; and it may be that we shall think it best to go with you, and all go together."

"God grant it, Sir!"

"And now for what remains to be communicated. We propose to retire from the world."

"Sir?"

"From the world of fashion, I mean; to take a small, ready-furnished cottage, on Long Island, and there live in a quiet, cheap way, till this hurricane throughout the world has blown over;—what say you both?"

"Agreed!" said Arthur.

"With all my heart!" said Julia.

"Can you be ready to-morrow, both of you?"

"We are ready now—this moment," said Arthur; "ar'n't you, Julia?"

"Hardly, Cousin Arthur; but I can be ready to-morrow."

"It will be rather dreary, I am afraid, and rather uncomfortable, to go into winter-quarters just now," added Uncle George; "but when the spring opens, and the beautiful garden is in flower——"

"A garden, too, Uncle George?"

"Yes, and a beautiful garden it is, though not very large; a flower-garden with hedges and shrubbery, and a few large trees, and a charming view from almost every room in the house. I am quite sure you will be satisfied."

This matter arranged, the rest of the morning was spent in paying off the servants and the hotel-keeper, and preparing for the morrow.

And would you believe it! they had not been so happy for months — hardly ever so happy, or so well satisfied with themselves, or so tranquil, since the death of Mr. Maynard. They were now all together, — "the world forgetting, by the world forgot," — and sick of the weariness and wastefulness of the public life they had so long led, against all their habits, purposes, and inclinations; — though they had been treated very kindly, and were under obligations that no money would repay, for the watchful care and patience of the landlord and waiters toward Uncle George, after what had happened, still they were glad to get away, at once and forever, from the luxury and bustle of such a life, and steal off to some quiet nook, where they might all be together once more, and breathe freely, and look one another in the face, and thank God that they had come to their senses at last.

"Brother," said Mrs. Maynard, as they sat together waiting for some papers to be signed; "as this may be the last day with the carriage, what say you to an hour's drive, where we can see for ourselves another phase of New York fashionable life?"

"But we are to go to Fulton Street, you know, mother."

"Yes, and our calculations must be made so as not to interfere with that meeting; for, to tell you the truth, my son, I have set my heart on going there to-day."

"And so have I!" said Arthur.

"And I!" said Uncle George.

"And I!" said Julia; "how very strange! I wonder who proposed it?"

"It proposed itself, I rather think," said Arthur; "for we all seemed to be of one accord, in one place, at the time."

There was a touch of lightness in Arthur's manner, which Mrs. Maynard felt a little dissatisfied with.

"Do you know," continued he in the same tone, and rather flippantly, as Julia thought, "that I have a strong desire to see that book they tell of in the papers, where the prayers are all entered from day to day, as they are received; a sort of order-book it would appear."

"Arthur Maynard!"

"Cousin Arthur!"

Arthur felt ashamed, but had not the courage to own it, and so, turning it off with a laugh, which grieved his mother still more, and brought a tear into Julia's eyes, he asked his mother where she proposed to go before the meeting.

"To this institution," said she, showing a card from the managers of the Wilson Industrial School.

"What is it, Elizabeth?" asked Uncle George.

"And where is it, mother?" said Arthur.

"It is a school, where over two hundred little girls, who are picked up in the streets, and gathered literally from the highways and hedges and ditches, thieves, beggars, and rag-pickers, are housed and clothed and fed, and prepared for usefulness, by some of the fashionable women of this great metropolis."

"All managed by women?"

"Altogether."

"And where is it, pray?"

"In Tenth Street, near the parade. Would you like to go, Julia?"

"By all means."

"And you, brother?"

"Certainly."

"But you would not, I see, Arthur, by your taking up your hat and preparing to pull on your gloves."

"No, mother, for I know all about the institution, I believe. It is in the Seventeenth Ward, — one of the many dangerous parts of this Babylon which I have been tempted to ransack while the rest of the world was asleep. I was in that very neighborhood, in fact, at the time you were so grievously hurt, Sir."

"Indeed!"

"But apart from all that, dear mother, I dare not undertake so much at once. I am afraid for myself, and truly afraid *of*

myself; and as I mean to be at the prayer-meeting, happen what may, — that is, forgive me, unless prevented by something serious, — I think you ought to be satisfied."

"I am, dear Arthur, — I am satisfied, — *almost*."

"Thank you, dear mother."

"And now please order the carriage, Arthur."

"How strangely that sounds, Julia! And yet you do not appear to give it a thought," said he.

Julia smiled sorrowfully; and then, with a cheerful tone, she added, "I did think of it, Arthur, and was glad to see your mother take the last ordering of the carriage so pleasantly."

"O, my mother can bear anything, Julia! She has been tried; but you, with your little experience, and few years, when the cup of trembling is offered you, to see you take it so uncomplainingly, astonishes me."

"The cup of trembling! Cousin Arthur. Surely, you do not believe that the giving up of a carriage would be regarded by a woman of my age as anything very serious. Pooh, pooh, — but for your mother, I should not give it a second thought."

Arthur flung out of the room, and the carriage was ordered, the visit was paid, and after an hour spent in going over the school, and hearing the exercises, and looking into the household arrangements, which were worthy of the highest praise, all three came away with a much better opinion of the "worldlings" of New York, than they ever had before; though among them were undoubtedly others — but how many was not asked — who were to be reckoned among the "salt of the earth" — unpretending Christians.

From the Industrial School they went to the Fulton Street prayer-meeting, taking Arthur on the way. They found it full, — crowded to suffocation, — but still as the chamber of death. Just as they entered, a prayer broke forth from a rough-looking sailor, who had been first led to the meeting by a little child. In telling how it happened, he sobbed and shook; and when that little child, who was standing on the seat by him, reached up and wiped his eyes, and called him *father*, all hearts were moved. There were no outcries, no extravagances, but a deep and awful seriousness and stillness.

After a verse had been sung, — "Come, Holy Spirit, Heavenly Dove," — and a word of expostulation offered, the gentleman who had charge of the meeting — with a watch and bell on the table before him, so that no time should be lost, and no speaker forget himself — read a request for prayer; to which, with a broken voice, just as if he knew the mother, and perhaps the son, he begged the special attention of "some brother."

The note ran thus: "A widowed mother would ask you to pray with her for the salvation of her only son."

"The only son of his mother, and she a widow," added the speaker.

And lo! before Julia could recover from her astonishment, — or Arthur from his, — a murmur filled the whole house like a sound "in the tops of the mulberry trees," and then died away, and somebody rose at her very elbow, and straightway the voice of Uncle George was heard in prayer. And such a prayer! Had the note been written by his own beloved sister, had that only son been Arthur himself, and if all the business had been pre-arranged, there could not have been a more direct and startling adaptation. At first Julia had her suspicions, and so had Arthur his; but when the prayer was ended, and the mother looked up, and they saw her pale face and streaming eyes, and heard her whisper, "how wonderful!" they were both satisfied that all had happened, not through man's contrivance, but altogether and entirely through the providence of God.

Arthur was visibly moved, but he said nothing; and though Julia saw him wipe his eyes, he turned away so impatiently, as if he did not like being watched even by her, — no, not even by his own dear mother, who had managed to get hold of one of his hands, which she held in hers, till each felt the other trembling, — that she durst not give way to the sudden hope that flashed upon her at first, when she saw the effect of the prayer.

Another dead silence followed, — three minutes of silent prayer, — during which five or six persons rose, while others lifted their hands to be prayed for; and then, poor Julia! her own note was read, and a grayheaded quiet-looking man, with a clear, pleasant voice, came forward on the platform with a tottering step, and

poured his heart out in thanksgiving and supplication, not only for the brother in a distant land, but for the sister who had not forgotten her brother. There was hardly a dry eye in the house, — but the hearts of all three were too full for speech; and while poor Julia was afraid to look into the face of her aunt, or of Arthur, as if her secret had been written upon her forehead, Uncle George, and Arthur, and his mother, were all possessed with a belief that almost overwhelmed them. Who was that aged man? The voice in prayer seemed to be familiar; and though the platform was a great way off, and the light rather dim, Arthur was quite sure that he had seen the speaker before; and Julia, it appeared afterwards, thought the same. There was, withal, such a remarkable adaptation of language and thought to the very case of poor Charles, so lately cast upon the world, fatherless and motherless, that all three were fully persuaded in their own minds that the prayer was meant for them, and for them only.

Other prayers went up of a similar character; and however strange they might appear at first, grew to be so natural and proper, long before the meeting broke up, that even Arthur seemed to be carried away by their simplicity and earnestness, and to overlook their strangeness. Julia was affected, even to tears, and so indeed was her aunt; while the Major was so utterly absorbed by his reflections, that he never once opened his mouth, until they had returned to the St. Nicholas, and were seated round the fire, waiting with a sort of melancholy pleasure to be summoned to their dinner, — their last dinner in that luxurious and sumptuous, though very comfortable establishment.

Arthur went off to the reading-room, and Julia to her chamber; leaving Mrs. Maynard and her brother sitting by the fire, in a thoughtful silence, — both musing on what had happened, and both avoiding the subject, as if each was hoping to find a clue to the mystery in some other way, and without questioning.

"Did you observe Arthur," said Mrs. Maynard, at last, "while that prayer went up from the platform?"

"Yes, — but only for a moment; for I was myself so astonished at the language of the written request, and then, at the deep feeling and earnestness of that venerable man who followed in prayer, that, as I live, my dear sister, I do not think I should have been

much more startled, had the name of poor Charles been mentioned: in fact, between ourselves, Elizabeth, I cannot help thinking that Julia sent in that note."

"Indeed! I hope you may be right, brother; but considering her deeply fixed habits, her conservative temper, her gentleness, and her unobtrusiveness, to say nothing about her dread of what would be called fanaticism in your church, dear brother, I dare not encourage the hope."

"All this I acknowledge, Elizabeth; but how came she there to-day; and for the first time?"

"I wish I knew, brother; but she might ask the same question of us; — why were we there to-day? and all together for the first time?"

Mrs. Maynard wanted to put the question more directly, for she, too, had her suspicions; but upon looking into her brother's eyes, her heart failed her, and she sat awhile, without speaking.

"Upon my word, Elizabeth," said he at last, "I hardly know what to say in reply to your question. I would not be over-credulous, nor superstitious; and yet, when I consider all the circumstances which have led to our going together, all of us, and all at the same time, — and all with such different purposes, — I am afraid to shut my eyes to the leading of God's providence."

"Brother George, — dear brother, — I cannot bear this; I must know the truth! Tell me, I beseech you, whether you were taken by surprise, when the note was read for 'the only son of his mother, and she a widow?'"

"Altogether."

"And yet, my dear brother, you prayed for my poor boy almost by name, as if the note had been prepared for him, and for him only, and by his mother, and in your presence."

"Did I? Well, sister, I must acknowledge the truth. When the note was read, I could not help looking at you, and though you were resting your head upon your hand so that I could not see your face, I saw signs of such deep feeling that I began to recall what you had urged upon Arthur; and the idea crossed my mind that you had sent in the note, and that you had contrived all the arrangements, whereby we should, at last, be found there together. Nothing would be more natural; and yet, I did

not like to put the question to you in so many words, knowing your aversion to what is called management."

"You astonish me, brother; and perhaps I shall astonish you yet more, when I say that I know nothing of the note in question; that I was wholly taken by surprise, when it was read; and I supposed, when you followed in prayer, that you, my dear brother, as if you had just found your way out of the wilderness, and saw the heavens opening — that you yourself had sent in the note for me."

"Can it be possible! How very strange!"

"Very; but no stranger than many events happening every day at this very meeting, if we may believe the Observer, and some of the business papers; and I must acknowledge that, if my poor Arthur was not so well read in Scripture, and not so familiar with the teachings of God's providence, and not quite so changeable and capricious, nor so fond of controversy, I should be greatly encouraged by his behavior of late, and especially to-day."

"And so should I."

At this moment the door opened, and Arthur entered with a bright countenance, and a cheerful step, — all seriousness had departed, — saying as he entered, "No, no, Julia, men are not made Christians by locking them up."

"Is Julia there?" asked his mother.

"Yes, but detained by a well-dressed beggar-woman — a very troublesome creature — whom I have no patience with. Come, come, Julia, we are waiting for you," he added, looking out into the entry, and beckoning.

"If you please, Madam," said the stranger, in a low, sweet, mournful voice, "I should be glad to see you for a few minutes by yourself. Day after day, I have called, but always in vain, till to-day; and now, I am afraid you are engaged. Can you not spare me a few minutes, dear young lady? I am not a beggar, and I am sorry to be troublesome; but the business I have with you is of such a nature, and so serious, that I must see you alone."

"Please shut the door, Cousin Arthur," said Julia, struck with the piteous earnestness of the poor creature, and secretly trembling as she led her away.

"Fiddle de dee!" said Arthur, shutting the door; "that's the way we are always humbugged! I wonder how many times that poor thing, as Julia calls her, has been sent away by the waiters or by Bessie, without ever troubling her *Missis*?"

"I hope never, my son!" said his mother, looking seriously alarmed.

"I thought she had the air of a gentlewoman," added Uncle George; "and her voice and language were both in her favor."

"I dare say, Uncle George; but if you were plagued as I have been for the last month, you would run from a beggar, as from a mad dog. They haunt you at every corner; they follow you like your shadow, waylaying you at every turn, — and thronging the entrances of all the public-houses, and theatres, and churches, and parks, — worse than the beggars of London, or the Lazzaroni of Naples; and the more you give them, the more they multiply. You cannot buy them off, — I have tried that, — and if you try to escape them by turning into another street, they are certain to follow and head you off."

"And this in New York!" said Uncle George, "the city swarming with police, and the people rioting in self-indulgence, while others in their midst are literally starving to death!"

"But Arthur, my son, the poor creature you have spoken so harshly to is not a beggar."

"Harshly, mother! did I speak harshly to her?"

"Your manner was by no means what I should have looked for in a young man, or in a gentleman of any age, toward even a beggar-woman."

"You are right, dear mother; it was indeed heartless, and I am ashamed of myself; and the moment I hear her step, I will go to her and say as much."

"Thank you, dear Arthur; that would be so like you."

"And then, I shall go away, perfectly satisfied with myself, I dare say, and be ready to repeat the offence, in some other shape."

"No, no, Arthur; let us hope for better things. You are thoughtless and forgetful, but kind-hearted; and if you would only be serious, I should be greatly encouraged. You must set a guard upon yourself, Arthur; you must keep watch and ward, or your flightiness will undo you."

"How very serious you are, dear mother."

"I feel so, Arthur. We must pray not to be led into temptation."

"Just what Julia says! We have been having a little serious talk together, — I haven't got over the prayer-meeting yet, — and she tells me that prayer is of no avail, without striving."

"Julia is right, Arthur," added his uncle. "It is not enough to pray; we are to watch and pray."

"Lest we may be led into temptation. Exactly! Just what she has been preaching to me; but I tell her, that inasmuch as our virtues come of these very temptations, — inasmuch as there can be no virtue, but in resisting and overcoming temptations, — I am not so clear that we should pray not to be led into temptation, or that we ought always to avoid temptation."

"Arthur, my dear son! That prayer was uttered by the Saviour himself, — and he had been sorely tempted and tried, — and he had triumphed. Yet he gave us that beautiful prayer for a model."

"Undoubtedly, dear mother," growing very serious again; "but perhaps when we say, as he did, Thy will be done, and not mine, the prayer is not that we may never be led into temptation, but that we may be strengthened as he was, in temptation. He prays that the cup may pass, — that he may not be led into temptation, — but adds, 'Nevertheless, not my will, but thine be done.'"

"Arthur is in the way of understanding all this, I trust," said his uncle; "and there is much truth in what he says. Men are not made Christians by locking them up. Though we are told to pray that we may not be led into temptation, yet only through our temptations are we strengthened; only by withstanding temptations are we disciplined here, for happiness and rest hereafter; and St. Paul, you remember, counts it all joy that he has been led into divers temptations."

"Yes, uncle; just as men are not made temperate by tying their hands behind them, or putting a padlock on their mouths. They must do their own work, through the help of God, — not of themselves, and without his help, nor through the contrivances of man, by legislation or otherwise, however much they may be helped by the earnest prayers and faithful coöperation of others.

Make a man religious, and he will be temperate of course; but it does not follow if you make him temperate, that he would become religious; for there are thousands of temperate men, who are not religious men."

"Right, Arthur, my dear boy, — or so nearly right, as to make further disputation useless; but here comes the waiter, to call us probably before the gong is sounded. Please go for Julia, and beg her to lose no time, as we have seats reserved at the public table to-day, and sometimes there is a difficulty, if you desire to be all together."

"With all my heart, uncle!" and up stairs he bounded.

He found Julia's door fastened, and the sound of earnest conversation carried on in very low voices within. He knocked, and delivered the message; but Julia begged him to make her excuses, and to say that she had a troublesome headache, and thought on the whole, she would have a cup of tea sent up to her room, instead of going down to dinner.

"I'll tell you what it is, Julia," said he, "if you flatter yourself that mother will consent to this — or Uncle George — on the last day of our being together here, you will find yourself mistaken."

"You are right, Arthur. I will be ready in five minutes," said she, opening the door, so that he could see the beggar-woman with her bonnet off, looking wild and strange, but happy; "but you must go down and take your seats, and then come for me, if you please; will you, cousin?"

"To be sure I will."

CHAPTER X.

As Arthur was hurrying back for Julia, his attention was attracted by low murmuring sounds in the passage-way, and as he drew near, he found Julia just parting with the stranger, who stood before her, with locked hands and a trembling earnestness of manner, which convinced him that something serious had happened.

Julia was very pale, and she tottered in her step as she took Arthur's arm; and thrusting a folded paper into her bosom, said to the mysterious visitor, — "You shall hear from us the moment we are settled. Any letter or message left for me at the apothecary's shop, where you first saw me, will be safe. Meanwhile, I beg of you to bear up, and put your trust in the Lord."

"Thank you, thank you, my dear young lady."

"And be very patient and hopeful. The sickness of your child may not be unto death, and I may be able to see her to-morrow, or the next day, perhaps, at furthest."

"God forever bless you! if the poor thing could only sleep, I should feel encouraged; but to lie there night after night without closing her eyes, or losing herself, so far as I can see, for a single moment, is very alarming; and all the more, as she seems to have lost all inclination for sleep."

"And you, Madam, — I wonder you are not all worn out with anxiety and watching."

"Mothers are not easily worn out, my dear; and as I manage to have a little rest every day, after we have got her up and put the room in order, I do not feel my strength giving way, nor even my courage," — wiping a tear, and then dropping a low curtsy, — "but I am detaining you."

Julia touched her hand in reply, as Arthur hurried her off to the dinner-table, wondering more and more at what he had just heard and seen. To hear Julia call her *Madam*, and the next moment to see the woman drop a housekeeper's curtsy, puzzled him exceedingly.

"Not a word of all this to Aunt Elizabeth, till I have had a consultation with her," said Julia, just as they entered the large dining-hall. "Nor to Uncle George, — we may want your help hereafter; and then you shall know, if not everything, at least enough to satisfy you that Mrs. Archibald is no beggar, and no impostor, but a gentlewoman who has seen better days, and well deserves our sympathy."

"Thank you, dear Julia, for your confidence in me; and may I not add, for your kindness to that poor woman, after my harshness; — and by the way, that reminds me of my promise to beg her pardon; but you will do it for me, if you see her before I do, will you not?"

"Certainly."

As Julia took her place at the table, her aunt and uncle, who sat opposite, looked up, and were about to ask a question; but were prevented by a sign from Arthur, who had reason to fear that listeners and eaves-droppers were about them; two or three at the table, and one at least behind his uncle's chair.

Julia was very pale and silent, and though she tasted of whatever was put before her, and allowed Arthur to choose for her, whenever she was questioned, she ate nothing, and found it no easy matter to swallow even two or three spoonfuls of the warm soup. Her aunt was troubled, and poor Arthur hardly knew which way to look, — for turn whither he would, he saw that all eyes were upon poor Julia, with an expression of mingled wonder and pity; and he heard, moreover, not a little whispering, and saw signals interchanged above and below them, on both sides of the table; and once, when he turned to speak to the waiter, he caught him in the very act of passing a card which had been placed in her napkin, with Mr. Pendleton's name upon it in pencil, to another waiter, who handed it, after a few minutes had gone by, to a person at the door, in the garb of a policeman. Arthur had watched the whole procedure, and felt sure that he

could not be mistaken; but he was vexed with himself that such a piece of impertinence — well meant or otherwise — should have caused him a moment's uneasiness. That it had done so, — and that he was uncomfortable, without knowing why, — he was soon obliged to acknowledge to himself, not being able to swallow another mouthful, after he saw the card passed over to the policeman.

There was little or no conversation at the table; and though Julia was urged and entreated to take a little of this, and a very little of that, as one dish after another went off untouched, and especially, to try a glass of smooth old port, like mother's milk, which would do her good, or at least a glass of champagne, that "could hurt nobody," she persisted in refusing altogether, or in touching and tasting so daintily, that her aunt saw the reason to be, not so much the headache, or the weariness, of which Arthur had told her, as a downright heart-sickness, and sheer inability to swallow.

As they left the table, and the waiters were bustling about, setting back the chairs, and making way for them on both sides, Arthur caught another view of the policeman, evidently on the watch, just outside of the large door, and saw another signal pass between two of the waiters, like a telegraph-message, just as Major Pendleton led off, with Mrs. Maynard on his arm.

Hurrying forward, he was not a little astonished to see two other odd-looking personages, evidently out of place and ill at ease, lurking about the broad passage-way, and keeping up, as it appeared to him, while the party were passing through, a constant communication, by looks, at least, if not by signals, with each other; and on turning his head, as they reached the bottom of the nearest stairway leading to their apartments, he saw all three of these very suspicious-looking gentlemen following in their wake, but with a careless loitering air, and not as if they had anything to do with one another; and yet the first wore a badge, and the other two were evidently on duty.

As the Major entered the parlor, one of the two stepped forward, as if to speak to him, but was instantly recalled to the proprieties of the service by telegraph; and the last thing Arthur

saw, they were all three whispering together near the head of the main stairway, just as the parlor-door was shut upon all outsiders.

"Aunt Elizabeth," said Julia, before they had time to be seated, "can you give me a few minutes in your chamber?"

"Certainly, my love, or in yours; I am afraid, brother, we shall not be able to get away to-night; you see how very ill poor Julia looks."

"No, no, dear aunt," said Julia, almost wildly. "To-night, to-night, — I beg of you! All my arrangements are made for going *home* to-night."

"Home, Julia!"

"And I would not stay here another night for the whole world, Uncle George. That I am far from being well, dear aunt, I acknowledge; and that is one reason why I am so very anxious to get away, — it would never do for me to be taken ill here, you know."

"Right, my poor child," said her uncle; "you want a home, and a home you shall have this very night, God willing."

At this moment somebody rapped at the door; and as it opened, a waiter handed a card to Mr. Pendleton, — the very card which had given Arthur so much uneasiness at the dinner-table. On it something was written in pencil.

On reading it, and glancing his eye into the passage-way, — where he must have seen all three of the policemen, if they were policemen, — his countenance flushed, and then grew suddenly pale, — pale as death. "Show them up to my chamber," said he to the waiter, "I will be there in five minutes."

"The waiter delivered the message in a whisper; but the gentlemen shook their heads, and begged the Major not to hurry himself; *they* were in no hurry, and would rather wait for him there."

"Confound the fools!" cried Arthur, seeing through every subterfuge the uneasiness Uncle George was trying to conceal; "let me speak to them; I will pack them off about their business in double quick time, if you say so."

"Thank you, Arthur; but as we are going away to-night, and they will not know where to find us to-morrow," — here one of

the strangers coughed, and another answered with a shuffle, — "I may as well see them now, perhaps."

At this moment another signal was interchanged, and Arthur was quite sure that he heard a laugh, and then a low, half-smothered giggle, as if others were on the watch, and not very far off. His blood began to be troublesome; and all the more, when his mother and Julia withdrew, — Julia more dead than alive, he remembered afterwards, when she came suddenly upon the policeman with the badge, and turned with such a piteous expression of terror, to look at her uncle, and then at him, — perhaps the poor child remembered what had happened just there to her brother only a little time before; and it might be that her heart died away within her at the recollection. Whatever it was, her look haunted him for many a long day, and he never could think of it afterward, without a shudder, and something of remorse and shame that he had not understood her better.

"Now you may show them in here, if you please, waiter," said Mr. Pendleton. "And, Arthur, you may leave us together awhile; but don't be out of the way when you are wanted."

As the waiter delivered the message, two of the men stepped forward together, and marching abreast, with the regular tramp of a night-patrol, stopped in the passage-way, near the door, while the foremost entered alone and shut the door after him.

Mr. Pendleton stood up with a steady serious look to receive him, and the man faltered, as he handed him a folded paper without speaking; which he opened hurriedly, glanced over, and then threw upon the table, as one might a dinner-card.

"What am I to understand by this? that I am your prisoner, I suppose?"

The man bowed.

"And the paper you have there in your hand, is what you call your warrant, hey?"

The man bowed again, without speaking.

"Please read it."

"Perhaps you had better run your eyes over it yourself, Sir; there may be listeners."

"Very true — thank you," said Mr. Pendleton, looking at the paper with dim eyes and shaking hands, yet speaking in a clear,

mild voice, like that of a man who feels quite sure of himself, and who, whatever he may have expected, is always prepared for the worst, and never to be taken by surprise. "But," he added, after a short struggle, "I desire to know whether I am to go with you at once, or whether I may not answer the charge to-morrow, as we have made arrangements for leaving the St. Nicholas to-night, and are all going over to Long Island together."

"Well, Sir," said the man, evidently struck with the bearing of the Major, and with his great gentleness of manner, "although you are my prisoner, and I am answerable for your appearance to-morrow, I do not see why you may not be allowed to carry out your arrangements for the evening, and get your family settled, — and, perhaps, without allowing them to know a word of the business, — if," — eyeing him from head to foot, and literally taking the measure of his magnificent proportions, inch by inch, — "if we could be sure of you."

"Sure of me! What mean you, Sir?"

"Why," — with a wink, — "you might slip through our fingers, you know, as a gentleman did here, not long ago; but if you choose to go in a carriage with me and one of my friends, just outside the door — the short man you see there — Sergeant Libbey, Sir, — a perfect gentleman, Sir, I assure you, — I think we might manage to accommodate you; and then, after your family were safe, you might come back with us, you know."

Mr. Pendleton was provoked; but seeing by the man's countenance that what he said was all in good faith, and well meant, he answered by touching the bell, and asking the waiter to go for Mr. Maynard.

"Arthur," said he, as soon as the startled young man appeared, "you must take charge of the ladies; I have business that must be attended to, and I beg of you to make my excuses, — you will hear from me to-morrow; and you may say to Julia, if you please, that what I foresaw has happened at last, though somewhat sooner than I expected. Tell her to be of good cheer, Arthur; and say to my dear sister, that 'whom the Lord loveth, he chasteneth.' Do not leave them, Arthur, till you hear from me; and let nothing prevent you from getting them over to-night,

and safely housed. I have promised Julia a home — and a home she must have; and you may tell them, too, that I have *set my house in order.*"

There was something awful in the sound of his uncle's voice, and something that Arthur never forgot, in the look of his eyes, and in the working of his mouth, as he said these few words, — "Tell them, too, that *I have set my house in order,*" and he began to feel a foreboding he durst not acknowledge to himself, and which it cost him a severe struggle to get over.

"Will you not see them, Sir, and say good-night, yourself, before you go?"

"No, my dear boy. I have no time — no heart just now — and they are in consultation above. Good-night, Arthur, — good-night!"

"Good-night, Uncle George! — but stay! why not leave them both here to-night, and allow me to go with you?"

"No, Arthur. To-night, I insist on their leaving New York. Dead or alive, they must go. The associations are too painful here; and if Julia should be taken ill where we now are, I would not answer for her life."

"Enough. This night they shall go, as you desire — *dead or alive!*"

Arthur had all sorts of misgivings; but he spoke cheerfully, and lost no time, after his uncle went away, in completing all the arrangements exactly as they had been projected, so that long before midnight they were all at home — at home, like St. Paul, "in their own hired house" — and happier than they had been for months, not to say for whole years, notwithstanding the absence of Uncle George, and the mysterious events of the evening. Poor Julia! strong as her faith had been, that dreadful badge, and the more dreadful expression of her uncle's eyes, when they encountered hers, just as she was stealing away with her Aunt Elizabeth, had shaken it more than she durst acknowledge to herself. But she was not wholly disheartened — not altogether hopeless. Of late, her good uncle had shown so steadfast and cheerful a determination, that the more she considered the circumstances, the better satisfied she was that he would not be left nor forsaken. For this, in the midst of her anguish and

terror, and secret foreboding, she prayed the whole night through, whenever she awoke. But she slept nevertheless, and, greatly to her astonishment, found herself refreshed and tranquillized, and wholly free from headache and nervous apprehension, and from that sinking of the heart which had so long troubled her; and when she entered the snug little breakfast-room, and found it so comfortable, and looking so cheerful and pleasant, and saw her aunt sitting by the fire, just as if she had settled at last into what she had so long been hoping for — a home — she found it no easy matter to control her feelings; and but for the sudden appearance of Arthur, she would have thrown herself weeping into the arms of her aunt, like an overwearied child. Yet she wondered at herself; and when Arthur stopped short, and looked first at her, and then at his mother, as if to satisfy himself that she was really the same helpless creature he had lifted out of the carriage the night before, and almost carried into the house, there was an expression of mingled astonishment and joy on his fine countenance which brought the color to her cheeks.

"Well, mother, how do you like your new home?" said he, drawing a chair up to her side, taking her hand between both of his, and kissing it.

His mother turned toward him with such a happy, quiet smile, that he needed no other answer.

"And you, Cousin Julia, — how do you like it?"

"Like it, Arthur! — I have not felt so much at home for years!"

"But Julia has not been over the cottage, as I have," said his mother. "She has only seen this dear little room, as we found it last night after our long ride in the dark, with a pleasant fire to welcome us, and the supper-table spread, — not for her, but for others, poor child!"

"You forget my own little chamber; that also I have had time to see, though I went into it half asleep, like a bird into her nest, after a long and wearisome flight. O, how thankful ought we to be!"

"But," continued Mrs. Maynard, with a slight quiver in her voice, "I should like to know where brother is, and when we are to look for him. Do you know anything of the na-

ture of the business that took him away so suddenly and so strangely?"

As the inquiry was not directed to Julia, by name, — for which, by the way, she was very thankful, — she began to busy herself with the breakfast arrangements, leaving Arthur to reply.

"No, mother," said he; "but he will be with us, you may be sure, the moment he can do so; and if prevented, we shall be certain to hear from him."

"Of course; but, between ourselves, Arthur, I did not much like the behavior of that rough-looking man, who stood just outside the door, as we went by."

Arthur tried a faint laugh, but failed; and Julia had occasion to go to the nearest window.

"No," continued his mother, "there was an ill-bred, almost insolent air, which it struck me that brother found somewhat offensive, and was about to rebuke in the foremost of the three, when he refused to go up stairs."

Arthur found that his mother had seen more, and heard more, than he had supposed, and was casting about in his mind for a pretence to steal away, when a sudden exclamation from Julia took him to the window.

"A carriage!"

"A carriage, Julia? I dare say it is brother."

"No, it is a stranger, — he is beckoning to the girl, — and now he gives her a note, — and now a card, upon which he has just written something, — and now the horses' heads are turned away. What can it mean?"

"Poh, poh! Julia! don't get nervous again, I beg of you. I will go and see for myself."

The carriage drove off, and Arthur soon returned with a note in Mr. Pendleton's handwriting, and a card, which he handed to his mother, without speaking.

Mrs. Maynard opened the note first, and after running her eyes over it once or twice, read it aloud. It ran thus: —

"DEAR ELIZABETH, — I hope to be at home to-day. Be of good cheer. The gentleman who hands you this — Mr. Winthrop Fay — is my legal adviser just now. He may desire to

see Julia by herself. Whatever he advises, you will be safe in doing. Your brother, G. A. P.

"———, Saturday morning, 7½.

"P. S.—'Let not your hearts be troubled. Ye believe in God. Believe also in me.'"

On the card of Mr. Fay was written: "You may look for me within the hour; and it may be well for Miss Parry and Mr. Maynard to be prepared for a short drive.

"With respects, &c., W. F."

"How strange!" said Julia.

"Odd enough, to be sure," added Arthur.

"What a pity we did not ask him in to breakfast," said Mrs. Maynard. "But we have no time to lose; come, come,—let us be ready for him, if you please, children; for if he is the man I think, he may be here *within* the hour."

Breakfast over, and a chapter in the Bible read, and a word of thanksgiving and supplication breathed, Julia and Arthur hurried off to equip themselves for the ride.

By the time they were ready the carriage appeared, hurrying very fast round the foot of a distant hill; and when it drew up, the door was flung open, and a gentleman wearing a shawl and a foraging-cap, and muffled up to the eyes, jumped out upon the piazza, without waiting for the steps to be let down, and hurried into the house.

After a word of greeting, he begged to see Mrs. Maynard by herself, handing another card to Miss Julia, as she and Arthur withdrew.

"Allow me, if you please, Madam," said he, "to waive all ceremony, and come at once to the point. Your brother assures me that I may communicate freely with you. Shall I speak plainly?"

"If you please."

"Do you know what your brother is charged with?"

"Charged with! I do not understand you, Sir!"

"I am glad of it, Madam. Will you permit me to inquire if you know what the business was, which took him away so unexpectedly last evening, just as you were about to go away all together from the St. Nicholas?"

"I have not the least idea, I assure you, Mr. Fay."

"Have you no suspicion?"

"Suspicion, Sir!"

"That is — you will excuse me, my dear Madam, but I am obliged to use the plainest language, so that I may not be misunderstood — you will forgive my abruptness therefore."

"Say no more, Mr. Fay. My brother's word is enough. You are his legal adviser, and I am ready to answer all your questions, and to do whatever you may advise."

"But you have not answered my last question."

"Indeed! what was it, Sir?"

"I asked if you had no *suspicion* of the business that took your brother away."

"None whatever."

"Enough. I am satisfied. Allow me to see Miss Parry for five minutes."

"With all my heart, Sir; but have you nothing more to communicate?"

"Nothing more, at present. After talking with her, I may have something to say, — not much however."

Mrs. Maynard was very much struck with the gentleman's bearing, and straightforward, business-like manner. Though comparatively young for a professional man of such reputation as he must have had, to enjoy the confidence of her brother at such a time, there was a grave courtesy, and withal a sort of peremptoriness in all he did or said, which betokened a large experience in the weightier business of life; but there was no time for further investigation; and she withdrew, promising to send Julia immediately.

Julia soon appeared, somewhat pale and anxious, and carrying in her hand the open note which her aunt had received, to prepare them, and the card from her uncle to her, on which he had written, "Talk freely with Mr. F—— as you would with me. Have no concealments. Everything may depend on his knowing all that you know. And then you will be safe, as I have told Elizabeth, in following his advice."

After handing a chair to Julia, and satisfying himself that the door was both ear-proof and eye-proof, by turning down

the scutcheon over the keyhole, he proceeded at once to business.

"May I ask, Miss Parry, if you know the nature of the business that took Major Pendleton away so suddenly last evening?"

"No, Sir."

Mr. Fay looked surprised; but after a moment of consideration he added, with a most encouraging smile, —

"Have you any *suspicion* of the truth, do you think?"

"I think I have, Sir."

"May I ask what it is?"

"I should not answer such a question, you may be sure, Mr. Fay, but for what my dear uncle has written here, upon this card, which you have seen, perhaps."

"Yes, it was written in my presence, read aloud to me, and then put into my hands for you, that no time should be lost in explanations or cross-questioning."

"Well then, I must acknowledge," — her voice trembled and so did her eyelashes, and she no longer looked Mr. Fay in the face, — "I must acknowledge that when I saw the policeman's badge, and heard the whispering at the door as we left the dining-room, and all the way up-stairs ——"

"Come to the point, I pray you, Miss Parry; we have no time to lose; I care not how you came to the conclusion, — I do not want your reasons, — I only want the conclusion itself."

Poor Julia! She half rose from the chair, and if the truth must be told, the flutter of her heart stopped all at once, and her eyes flashed fire. To be so questioned! and by a middle-aged handsome man, as if they were in a court of justice and she the merest simpleton; really, she had half a mind to bid him good morning; but when she thought of her uncle, and saw the unchanging — unchangeable — tranquillity of the countenance before her, she began to review the question.

"Well," said he.

"Well, Sir, if you must have my answer, without my reasons, be it so. You ask if I had any suspicions. I answer that I had; you ask what they were, and I now answer that I then suspected, and still suspect," — breathing hurriedly — "that the business which took him away so suddenly last evening related to

certain Bank of England notes, that were supposed to be forgeries."

"Capital! — capital! what a memory you have, to be sure! and if they are obliged to put you upon the stand, I will answer for you, under any circumstances."

"Upon the stand, Sir! What mean you? What on earth am I to suppose?"

"No matter, just now. I have other questions to propound, before submitting myself to a cross-interrogatory."

Julia bowed.

"I desire to ask, whether you have now, or ever had, any record of the numbers on the notes which you sent your brother Charles?"

"No, Sir," answered the poor girl, wondering what would come next.

"Nor of those your uncle twisted up together, and burned in your presence, not long ago?"

Julia gasped for breath.

"No, Sir," she said at last, in a very faint low voice.

"Very well; so far, so good."

"Anything more, Sir?"

"Not much; can you give me the date of your letter to your brother, wherein you desire him to destroy those very notes, immediately, and by the *advice of your uncle*?"

"No, Sir; but I can fix the date, if it should become necessary."

"About how long ago was it?"

"It was the very day after the notes were burned in my uncle's chamber."

"Ah — indeed — that explains it!" rubbing his hands thoughtfully and slowly, and knitting his brows, like a chess-player about to throw aside all his past combinations, and checkmate in two or three moves.

Julia began to feel a slight misgiving; but when she called to mind how much he already knew which must have been communicated by her Uncle George himself, and could not have come from anybody else, her suspicions died away, and she began to breathe more freely.

"The notes were burned on the very night of the terrible snow-storm, were they not?"

"Yes."

"Very well; and now for the rest of my errand."

Here he drew up his chair directly in front of the poor child, who began to be somewhat frightened, and sat facing her, for several minutes, without speaking. Meanwhile he breathed hurriedly, and his eyes grew larger and larger, and more luminous, and the strong shapely hands, with which he grasped his knees, trembled.

It is not to be denied that Julia was glad to see in the strange, and hitherto imperturbable creature, who had been torturing her so triumphantly, something of that weakness which had been so troublesome to herself, and of which, to say the truth, she had been very much ashamed; as if, poor thing! a woman were nothing more than a man, — as if a Damascus blade were a sledge-hammer, cleaving felt turbans and iron helmets, if worthily managed, and shivering like glass, if handled ignorantly, or presumptuously.

At last, the gentleman spoke, but with a manner so deferential, and in a voice so changed, that she could not help looking at him with some degree of amazement.

"Your uncle, Miss Parry, I have been acquainted with personally but for a few weeks. I need not say perhaps, that notwithstanding appearances — and rumors and reports — I have the highest opinion of him."

"Notwithstanding appearances, and rumors, and reports, Mr. Fay!"

"Bear with me, if you please; hear me through, and then judge for yourself. Your uncle tells me that you are a woman to be depended upon — that I need not fear to communicate freely with you — that you are upheld by a strong and earnest religious feeling — in a word, that you may be trusted, in a matter of life and death."

"I am exceedingly obliged to my dear uncle, Sir — but ——"

"A moment, if you please. When I say you are to be trusted in a matter of life and death, I mean it — and so did he."

Another long pause, with growing agitation. At last, after

leaving his chair, and going to the window, and reëxamining both doors, he seated himself in front of her again, though somewhat nearer.

"Miss Parry," he said at last, with visible effort, and with something of emotion. "Your uncle's life — not his character and standing only, but his life — may depend upon you."

"Merciful Father!"

"Be calm, I pray you. Whatever you do must be done quickly, and with a full knowledge of the consequences. By the laws of England, forgery is no longer a capital offence, though, to a man of high standing and lofty purposes, a conviction would be certain death, and this whether innocent or guilty, — and what is more, a lingering death. I believe him to be innocent; and I believe, too, that while appearances are all against him, it will turn out hereafter, if we are allowed time to get in our proof, that he has been the victim of a foul conspiracy, and that in his fixed determination to save others he may be led to sacrifice himself."

"Does he say this?"

"No indeed! not he. About all the circumstances I have mentioned, he speaks freely; but beyond that, he refuses to be questioned, so that I am feeling about in the dark."

"Does Uncle George say, in so many words, that he is innocent — wholly innocent?"

"He does."

"Then I am satisfied. Only tell me in what way I can be of use to him, — tell me what to do, and I will do it, come what may!"

"Just what I expected! And now that you may understand how much depends upon you, allow me to state the facts which will be in evidence against him on the trial. And first, as to what they can prove without your help."

"Without my help! I do not understand you!"

"Be patient, and I will try to make myself understood."

"Go on, Sir."

"Be more composed, I pray you, or I cannot go on. You are dreadfully agitated."

"Go on — go on — I beseech you."

"The facts, then, briefly, are these. About six or eight months ago, it was discovered that forged Bank of England paper, to a very large amount, — nobody knew how large, indeed, for all parties had an interest in keeping that a secret, lest the good notes should be discredited throughout the world, — had been executed by a new process, and with astonishing accuracy, and put in circulation throughout large portions of Europe, and in two or three of our cities on the very same day. A body of the Bow Street police were sent over to this country, and measures were taken throughout our whole confederacy, and through all the British possessions; but after a few weeks, nothing more was heard of the story, — it seemed to die away of itself, or to have been hushed up."

"Well, Sir; and what then?"

"Perhaps you saw an account in the papers of the partly consumed notes which were lately found in Broadway, near the Metropolitan?"

Julia bowed; but her heart was too full for speech. The dreadful truth began to loom up in a new shape, — vast, shadowy, and overwhelming.

"Well," continued Mr. Fay, "it so happened that the numbers and other marks were legible upon three of these burned notes; and by a most extraordinary chance, the Superintendent, on reading the paragraph, and following up the search, happened to remember certain Bank of England notes, which were found in the possession of a hotel-thief, who was taken to the watch-house the same night with your brother, whom, it appears, he had followed from the St. Nicholas. These notes were traced to you, and at last returned to you, after the fellow was convicted, — were they not?"

"Yes."

"While they were in the custody of the law," — looking her straight in the eyes, and speaking very slowly, — "the numbers and marks were registered."

Julia was overwhelmed, — not so much by the fact mentioned, however, as by the appalling solemnity of Mr. Fay, when he said this; for she, poor child! saw little of its bearing upon the dread result.

"On seeing the paragraphs in the paper, as I have said before, the Superintendent, who is not a man to be misled or hoodwinked, thought of looking at the record of these notes, and, to his great consternation, — and I might say sorrow, perhaps, — the numbers and marks were found to agree with the printed list!"

"Well, Sir, of course they did. It could not be otherwise."

"God help you, dear child! do you not see that this fact brought home the forged paper to your possession; and that if you should not clear yourself, by convicting somebody else, nothing could save you?"

"Me! — why, what had I to do with it?"

"You had received the notes from your uncle, had you not?"

"Certainly."

"Then — look at me, I pray you, and be prepared ——"

"I am prepared, Sir."

"Then, my dear young friend, one of two things must follow; you must either convict your uncle, by taking the stand against him, if allowed to testify; or you must take all the consequences upon yourself, — the forged paper being found in your possession. I do not wonder you are terrified; but allow me to finish," he added, as poor Julia sat wringing her hands in silence.

"While the Superintendent and the Bow Street officer were in consultation, — for it seems the search had never been intermitted, though the story had been allowed to die away, — the officer put into his hands your letter to your brother, containing some of these very notes."

Julia fell back in the chair, and covered her face with her hands.

"In that letter, it so happens that you tell your brother where you got the notes; and this, I may venture to say, saved you, while it went to make the case all the stronger against your uncle."

"How did my letter come into the hands of the Bow Street officer, — can you tell me?" said Julia, as soon as she could get her breath.

"It went to the Canadian dead-letter office; and on being opened, the money was about being returned to you at New

York, when, by some accident, I hardly know how, they happened to think of comparing the numbers, and it was found that they corresponded with a part of the printed description lodged in the mayor's office months before, and wholly forgotten. That letter was instantly forwarded to the Bow Street officer here."

"I see! I see! Heaven help my poor uncle!"

"From that moment, you and your uncle, and even your aunt and young Mr. Maynard, were watched literally, night and day. There are no acknowledged spies in the St. Nicholas, but there, as everywhere else, in our own houses, information may always be had for the asking — with a fee."

"Proceed! why do you stop?"

"And when you sent the last letter to your brother, telling him to destroy the notes, *at the desire of your uncle*, that settled the business; the letter was intercepted; a friend of mine, who is a friend of your family, and well knew your father, saw it, and read it."

"Who was that friend, if you please?"

"No, no, excuse me. I am not allowed to mention his name yet. By and by you will know him. He has about promised to appear, when most wanted."

"Well ——"

"That letter, you now see, fixes the charge upon your uncle; and he must account for the possession of the forged notes, or take the consequences."

"I see! I see! Oh, I shall go distracted! My poor aunt! She knows nothing of this, I hope!"

"Not a word, — nor does her son. Perhaps they never will, if we manage wisely."

"God, in his mercy, grant! It would kill her!"

"But everything may depend upon you."

"Upon me, Sir! — and how, pray?"

"You have not wholly misunderstood me, I am sure; and yet I find it necessary to be very plain with you."

"If you please."

"Well, then, as you are the only witness against your uncle, if you withhold your testimony, they cannot convict him."

This being suggested in a very low, quiet voice, Julia was not

much startled at first; but while she was weighing the matter, and trying to understand it, she happened to lift her eyes to his, and straightway she began to falter and shrink; and when she would have answered, her speech was inarticulate, and like that of a dreamer moaning in her sleep. At last, after two or three efforts, while he fixed upon her his large, deep, tranquil eyes, till she trembled all over, she said, —

"But how am I to withhold my testimony, if I am questioned?"

"That will depend upon *how* you are questioned, and *where*, and by whom. If you are once put upon the stand, it will be too late."

"Upon the stand, Sir! Surely, you have no idea of making me a witness against my poor uncle, by putting me upon the stand, as you call it? Why, Sir, the very thought of such a thing, — to be questioned and cross-questioned in public, as I know people sometimes are, however honest and truthful they may be, — would frighten me out of my senses."

"No such thing, my poor child."

"Poor child!" thought Julia. "How durst a man of his age, — not so very old, neither, — how durst he treat me as a mere child!"

"We, of course," he continued, "have no idea of calling you; but the prosecutor must; and when you are once under oath, of course everything must come out, as you are sworn to tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth."

"Certainly."

"Of course, then, if your uncle is to be saved, you, as the only witness to be feared, must be put out of the way."

"Put out of the way! And how?"

"O, leave that to me. We can manage that with some friend of your family."

"And this, then, is what I am to understand by withholding my testimony?"

Mr. Fay bowed.

"Yet you profess to believe that my dear uncle is not only guiltless, but blameless."

"Precisely."

"Mr. Fay, allow me to ask you if you believe in God, — in a God of justice and truth, — in a God, who has declared that he will never leave nor forsake them that put their trust in him?"

"I do indeed, my dear young friend, but ——"

Julia rose with a dignity that awed the man of law, and stood with her calm serious eyes fixed on him, till he turned away and appeared somewhat abashed.

"One question more, Mr. Fay. Does my dear uncle desire me to withhold my testimony; or, in other words, to run away and secrete myself, and cast off all dependence upon our heavenly Father?"

"No; he leaves the whole question with you. He gives no advice, he urges no argument, no entreaty, no expostulation. After hearing all I might have to say, you were to decide for yourself."

"I thank my dear uncle for this, and I thank you for your great plainness of speech; but my mind is made up, — I shall not fly, I shall not hide myself, I shall not withhold my testimony, come what may!"

The only reply Julia received to this exceedingly solemn assertion of her trust in God, — come what might, — was a look of unqualified admiration, which brought the color into her cheek, and sent a thrill to her finger-ends; of which, when left to herself, she afterward thought, with a mixture of astonishment and terror. What could it mean? And why did she feel no more indignation?

"Just what I expected," said Mr. Fay, moving towards the table, and taking up his hat. "Just what your uncle told me, when I proposed to see you, before I took another step in the business. Perhaps you would not be unwilling to know just what he said?"

Julia bowed in silence; all power of speech was gone. She trembled from head to foot; and her flushed countenance, and the shadow in her eyes, betrayed a feeling she would not have acknowledged for the world, — even to herself. The strangest man! she thought; and then, how steadfast, and calm, and self-possessed, while doing his errand of death!

"He said," my dear young lady, "with a look I never shall

forget, and with the saddest smile I ever saw on the face of mortal man, — it was what I should have looked for in the face of a dying martyr, — he said, at my suggestion, — which, give me leave to say, was strictly professional, and coming under what we men of the law understand to be our professional duty, — we are to be faithful to our client. I understand the questioning of your eyes. You wonder if we are to be more faithful to our client than to ourselves? or, perhaps, to God? Very well, I am not ashamed to answer you, that in what is called our faithfulness to a client, we are often most unfaithful to ourselves, and to God."

Julia shook her head, mournfully.

"But," continued Mr. Fay, "at this rate, I shall never come to what your uncle said of you. He said ——; are you fully prepared?"

"I am, I believe."

"He said I might see you, and welcome; that he would say nothing to influence you, but that you were one of the last women in the world to be turned a single hair's breadth from what you might believe to be your duty; — *and I have found it so.*"

Julia could hardly stand.

"Yet more. Though I did not quite believe your uncle, — for I never failed before in all my life where I had such an object in view," — smiling, — "I insisted on his giving me a line to you, which would be sure of engaging your confidence; and then, — you will excuse me, my young friend, — I felt quite sure of prevailing."

"Indeed!"

"Yes, *indeed!* but you have triumphed, and I am heartily glad of it; and what is more," taking her hand, "I sincerely beg your pardon for having so misunderstood you."

At this moment the door opened, and Arthur was entering with a hurried careless air, when the position of the parties, and their looks all lighted up, and glowing with signs of the deepest emotion, as they stood together, — Julia trembling, with downcast eyes, and Mr. Fay holding both her hands in his, — made him stop, and he would have stolen away, if he could have done so without being seen; but it was too late.

"I beg ten thousand pardons," dear Julia, said he, blushing

and stammering; "but I was looking for my gloves, and being still a stranger, you know, I mistook the door."

"I am glad you have come, Sir," said Mr. Fay, without a sign of trouble or embarrassment. "I have been trying to persuade your cousin to do something unworthy of her, — you'll excuse me, Sir."

Arthur's brow grew dark.

"But she has baffled me at every turn, and this, without human help or counsel, in the strength of her own lofty nature; and I have abandoned the field. She will communicate with you, according to her own pleasure; but I want you to go with me; — nothing is left for us now but to have as private an examination as possible, or rather, to waive an examination, and give bail."

"Bail, Sir! Examination! You forget, perhaps, that I know nothing of the business you have come hither about; nor does my mother."

"Very true; but your cousin here will give you and your mother, in due time, I dare say, all the information you require. On our way, too, I can book you up in a measure. Meanwhile, we have not an hour to lose; — and in fact, all we want is time. But I must not delay. Good morning, Miss Parry. My respects to your aunt. I hope to see you both again to-morrow."

And, saying this, he took Arthur's arm, and hurrying off to the coach, rode as fast as the horses could go, on his way back to the city.

CHAPTER XI.

ARTHUR was troubled. From what he had just seen with his own eyes, he could not help thinking that Julia and Mr. Winthrop Fay must have met before. They had come together as perfect strangers; Julia, the shy, haughty, sensitive Julia, and a middle-aged man of the law, by no means very prepossessing in his appearance or manners. They are left alone together a little while, not more than half an hour, and when he enters the room without knocking, he finds them both standing up near the door, — Julia trembling and pale, and the stranger holding both her hands in his, very much as if they were saying in their hearts, if not aloud, something mournful and hopeless. "Upon my word, I cannot bear this! I had always thought Julia so unlike other women," said he to himself.

"And so she is, my young friend!" said Mr. Fay.

Arthur jumped. Poor fellow! he had been thinking aloud; but somehow the oddity of Mr. Fay's remark, and the pleasant smile about his mouth, began to reconcile him to the uncomfortable companionship he had tried to escape from, by flinging himself back into the farthest corner of the coach, and muffling himself up in a cloak. "On the whole," he continued, as he thought over the whole scene afresh, and tried to overcome a fit of the sulks before it should be too late, "I think I must put the passage I saw into English verse, and show it to Julia, and give her a chance for explanation, — stay!" — and out he whipped his ivory tablets, and wrote, — unaware that he was murmuring the words to himself, as they arranged themselves to the rhythm in his mind, —

"Oh, can it be that we
Are parted forever!
Never again to meet,
Never, oh never!

"Capital," said Mr. Fay.

"Confound the fellow!" thought poor Arthur; "I wouldn't be left alone with him for the world!"

"I do not wonder you were astonished," continued Mr. Fay; "but I will say this for your comfort, and forestall your question — you need not deny it, Sir, I see it in your eyes — that I never saw your cousin till to-day; that our strange intimacy grew out of circumstances, which it is now high time for you to be acquainted with. Had she yielded, you might never have known what I am now about to communicate."

Arthur stared, with a look of growing uneasiness.

"For then, as no prosecution could have been sustained, the whole affair might have been allowed to die away, without coming to the knowledge of your mother, or yourself; but as the matter now stands, the government must proceed; she will be summoned, of course, and we must depend altogether upon delay, till we can get our witnesses."

Arthur sat looking at his companion in blank astonishment. Not a word of the whole did he understand. Was the man talking in his sleep? or only thinking aloud, as he himself had been doing but a few minutes before?

"How old is that cousin of yours?" continued Mr. Fay, in the same low, distant, half-dreaming voice.

"Hardly eighteen, Sir."

"Indeed! a most remarkable woman, Sir."

"And of great personal beauty," added Arthur.

"O, I dare say; but I was not thinking of her personal beauty, Sir. I was thinking of her high principle, of her sound judgment, and the clearness of her understanding. By my faith, Mr. Maynard," — fastening his eyes upon Arthur, — "that woman is worth battling for. Do you smoke?"

Arthur laughed, in spite of himself, as he took the offered cigar, and threw himself back into the seat, and puffed away for two or three minutes, before he was reminded by his companion that cigars need to be touched with fire, if one would enjoy their aroma, or taste their flavor, in a cold, clear morning.

Arthur colored, and tried to turn it off with a joke; but Mr. Fay gave no heed to the explanation, and straightway entered

upon a detailed account of all that had happened, from the beginning to the end of the bank-note affair, and the negotiation with Julia.

Arthur could hardly believe his own ears. What! his Uncle George — that high-minded, honorable merchant, whose word was never to be questioned — *he* charged with forgery — with downright forgery! "Oh, preposterous!" he cried.

"Both preposterous and shameful! I agree with you; and now, what is to be done?"

"If you please, Mr. Fay, that is just what I desire to know. As for Julia, I hope you did not *advise* her to conceal herself?"

"How could I?"

"But you urged every consideration likely to prevail with a timid, sensitive, devoted woman."

"Very true; but that, my dear Sir, was all done, as I undertook to do it, in my professional capacity. I meant she should judge for herself; I meant, if she yielded, there should be at least a plausible excuse, and a full knowledge of the consequences to justify her; and if she refused, I meant her to have all the glory; in fact, Sir, I was piqued into doing what I did, in the way I did, by the smile I saw on your uncle's countenance when I proposed tampering with her; I did not believe the woman breathed, who, if left to herself — under such circumstances ——"

"*Tampering*, Sir! I do not understand precisely what you mean by that word."

"I dare say; it is a technical term, signifying little or much, according to circumstances. In the case of your Cousin Julia, I meant only, that while I put the facts before her, leaving her to judge for herself, and taking care not to advise, nor mislead her, I held it to be professional and proper to do just what I did, *as* I did it."

"Of course," muttered Arthur.

"I understand *you*, Mr. Maynard; but when you know me better, you will do me justice. Meanwhile — to return to my story. I was about saying that I was piqued into doing more than I might otherwise have done, by that smile I saw in the Major's eyes; — your uncle is a Major, I believe?"

"Many years ago, and in the militia; in fact, I believe he was a Brigadier at a very early age; but the title had been overlooked, or forgotten, till it was revived here by General Talmadge, who, I am told, never forgets any of these things."

"And, as I have said before, I did not believe that a woman lived, who, if she were left entirely to herself, would be capable — under such circumstances — of withstanding the impulses of her affection for a friend so dear, and so greatly wronged. You must forgive me, Sir, and so must your mother; for I declare to you, upon my honor, that what I did was against my conscience."

"A capital reason, to be sure!"

"Not against my professional conscience — but against my conscience, as a man. You understand the distinction, I dare say."

"Indeed I do not."

"Very well; when we have a good opportunity, I will endeavor to enlighten you upon that subject."

"If you please."

"Meanwhile, that you may be prepared for the controversy, which I foresee must come, sooner or later, I beg to ask if the wear and tear of a professional, or other conscience, be not taken into account, what on earth is to become of us? — always in the market, as we are, to the highest bidder, getting our reputation and our largest fees, not from good cases, but from bad cases, and being, as Jeremy Bentham says, 'the indiscriminate defenders of right and wrong.'"

Arthur smiled, but was afraid to trust himself with a reply.

Here the carriage drew up; and Mr. Fay sprang out, and calling to the coachman to wait, hurried through one of the back entrances of a large building — followed by Arthur — into a dark, low room, where they found a magistrate upon the bench, in conversation with a gentleman, whose back was toward them.

"There is Mr. Fay himself," said the magistrate; "and perhaps you had better arrange it with him."

The gentleman turned, bowed, and came forward to speak with Mr. Fay. It was the prosecutor.

"Are you ready, Mr. Attorney?" said the magistrate.

"I believe so, your honor; but I should like to see the officer before I decide."

The magistrate assented, and Mr. Attorney slipped away through a side-door, and after a short absence returned, saying he was not ready, but if his honor pleased, would be ready on the morro v.

Mr. Fay rose, with an air of unruffled serenity, and taking up a folded paper, which the clerk had just withdrawn from a large file, and laid upon the table before him, begged his honor to bear with him for a few moments, while he ran his eye over the complaint; after which he had no doubt of being able to arrange the business with Mr. Attorney.

"Silence there! silence in court!" cried a subordinate, and the low whispering of the scattered groups, which had come together by threes and fours, in different parts of the room, died away, and all eyes were fixed upon the judge.

Having read the paper through very carefully, dwelling here and there on particular passages, and going back to compare part with part, now looking at the date, and now at the return of the officer on the back, without a change of countenance, though he had detected a fatal error, as he believed, in the specifications, and knew that the government, as the prosecuting attorney is sometimes called, was watching him narrowly, Mr. Fay turned to the judge, and begged leave to suggest that his client was ready, and anxious to proceed.

The prosecutor smiled, and glanced at the judge.

Mr. Fay saw the smile and the glance, but continued with the same quiet, natural, soothing manner, and without betraying the least emotion.

"Yes, your honor, — *ready* and anxious for the investigation. Hitherto a man of irreproachable character, — I might say, of unquestionable character, — he has no desire to escape, or evade, or delay the unpleasant inquiry. And I ask of the government, and of your honor, that the investigation may not be delayed, nor postponed, unless, in the judgment of my learned friend, it should appear to be his unquestionable duty."

"I cannot be ready until to-morrow, Mr. Fay; but, if my witnesses are then here, I will agree to take it up the first thing," said the prosecutor, without lifting his eyes or turning his head.

"I cannot interfere," said the magistrate, on seeing Mr. Fay

turn a look of appeal toward the bench. "The government are always permitted to manage their cases in their own way, and must be allowed a reasonable time, of which, Mr. Attorney, you are to be the judge; unless, to be sure," he added, after a moment's consideration, "there should be good reason for interference upon other grounds. I do not think a day is too much for the preparation of a case, which, if I understand it," glancing at the folded paper, "may involve questions of great magnitude, — questions of international law, which are not only new, but of a very serious nature."

Mr. Fay appeared to acquiesce; but in the very act of sitting down without further reply, he "let fall," as it is termed, a careless remark that, "perhaps, if the witness, or witnesses, were not here, an arrangement might be made, by admission or otherwise, which would save the time of the court, and promote the ends of justice, while the apparent hardship toward his unhappy client might be avoided."

Whereupon the prosecutor, being thrown off his guard, started up with great earnestness.

"I will be frank with my learned brother," said he. "Our principal witness, — a witness without whom it would not be safe for the government to go to trial, — is not here."

"Has that witness been summoned, may I be allowed to ask?" said Mr. Fay.

"No, your honor. She has left the city, and the officer has not been able to find her."

Mr. Fay had now accomplished the secret purpose of all this manœuvring. He had found out that the principal witness, without whom it would not be safe, as the government acknowledged, for the prosecutor to go to trial, was a woman, and that she had left the city. Of course, it could be no other than Julia; but to make "assurance doubly sure," he added, bowing to the court as he arose, and then turning toward Mr. Attorney, —

"I must be as frank with my learned brother as he has been with me. The witness who cannot be found by the officer, I have left within the last hour. Had proper inquiries been made at the St. Nicholas, all the information required would have been

furnished. There was no mystery in her leaving, — no concealment of purpose ; cards of address were left, and the arrangements had been going on for a week."

"May I inquire of the learned gentleman, if the lady is now to be found?"

"Certainly; and if it should be thought advisable, here is a gentleman," pointing to Arthur, "who is ready to go with the officer at once; or, if Mr. Attorney insists upon it, we will undertake to produce her in court, within two hours at furthest, and without a subpœna."

"My learned brother will pardon me, but I must be allowed to say that, in my judgment, there seems to be something irregular in all this procedure, — I might go further, and say something very strange — *very*," growing more and more eager and earnest as he proceeded, and constantly appealing to the judge with his eye, "the principal witness for the government avoiding process ——"

Mr. Fay smiled.

"Or, at any rate, leaving the city; the counsel for the prisoner holding communication with her, and then offering to produce her in open court, and without a subpœna! I must say," growing vehement and flushing up to the temples, "I must say, it appears to me a very strange procedure."

The judge seemed to think so too.

"My brother will not find it so very strange, I hope," said Mr. Fay, "when he comes to know all the facts, — the relationship that exists between the parties; and is informed, moreover, that, as counsel for the accused, I felt obliged to go over to the house, where a widowed sister, and this beloved niece — the witness — were living together, and were left almost alone, and wholly ignorant of what had happened."

Here the judge and prosecutor interchanged a look, which brought Mr. Fay to his feet again, just as he was settling into his chair.

"However, notwithstanding the relationship I spoke of between the witness and the accused," he continued, with great seriousness of manner, "I can assure my learned friend that the witness will not hide herself, nor fly; and that when she is

wanted, she will be forthcoming, and when questioned, he will have the truth, and the whole truth, and nothing but the truth. Yet more, — if the gentleman desires it, and thinks it would be proper, — the witness will enter into recognizance forthwith, to any amount required."

The prosecutor seemed puzzled at first; but after a little consideration, he answered, —

"If my brother will be so obliging as to say just what he wants, perhaps we may be able to come to an understanding."

"Certainly, nothing could be more reasonable. I propose, then, to have the whole business arranged now. Let the prisoner be called, and have the warrant read to him; after which, if he pleads not guilty, we will waive the preliminary examination, and give any amount of bail that may be required, for his appearance hereafter in the higher courts, to answer the charge."

"What say you, Mr. Attorney?" asked the judge.

"What can I say, your honor? I do not see how I can help myself. The government cannot oblige the accused to go to trial, if he chooses to waive the examination, I suppose?"

"Let the prisoner be brought into court," said the judge.

"Silence there! silence in court," cried the constable. "Silence there! silence!" repeated the door-keepers and subordinates, a little further off. "Look to the passage-ways, and have them cleared, Mr. Officer," added the judge.

"Excuse me for a moment," whispered Mr. Fay to Arthur, who had been stealing nearer and nearer to him, in the progress of their skirmishing, and was now just behind his chair. "I will be back in two or three minutes;" and for the first time, a look of triumph overspread his countenance, like sunshine, and as Arthur himself acknowledged to Julia, his wonderful eyes flamed outright, as he glanced at his young friend, lifted his forefinger, and hurried away, a little in advance of the officer.

"Call the next case, Mr. Clerk," said the judge. "And gentlemen," he added, as the court began to fill up, and the bar itself was crowded with unprofessional eager listeners, all on tiptoe with expectation, "you will see the necessity of being pre-

pared. The case on hand may be soon disposed of; and there must be no delay, under the great pressure of business now before the court."

While other cases were called, and arrangements were in progress, Mr. Fay reappeared, and, after a few moments, the Major followed, looking pale, as with watching, but untroubled and self-possessed.

All eyes were turned toward him, and a low murmur filled the large room, as he followed Mr. Fay, and was about taking a chair at his elbow.

For a moment, even the judge appeared to be carried away by the manly bearing of the accused; and the prosecutor himself appeared a little embarrassed and astonished, and bowed very low in reply, when Mr. Fay, leaning toward him in a confidential way, and speaking in a whisper, though loud enough to reach the bystanders and the bench, asked if the prisoner should be allowed to sit within the bar where he might confer with his counsel.

A stillness like that which settles upon the house of death followed, as the Major took a chair by Mr. Fay.

"Is the gentleman ready, Sir?" said the clerk to Mr. Fay, with an exceedingly deferential air.

Mr. Fay bowed, and the Major stood up at a signal from him, as the clerk called his name, and then proceeded with the complaint, slowly and distinctly, so that everybody heard it, and all were astonished both at the nature and magnitude of the charge, and then at the composure of the accused.

Having finished reading the complaint, a short silence followed, and then a startling question, which poor Arthur was ill prepared for. He felt it like a blow.

"What say you, George A. Pendleton, are you guilty or not guilty?"

"Not guilty."

"Are you ready for your trial?"

Here Mr. Fay interposed. "May it please your honor," said he, deferentially, and in a voice which seemed low to Arthur, when he thought over the affair afterward, though it filled the room, and secured the attention of all, "most of our witnesses

are beyond the reach of process, either abroad just now, or living at a distance; and we propose to waive the examination here, and give bail, if your honor will fix the amount."

Something was here said by the prosecutor about notice and justification, of which Arthur could make nothing, and then a list of names was handed to him by Mr. Fay, and after a short consultation, something was agreed upon, it appeared, and the judge wrote a few words at the bottom of a printed paper, which he handed to the clerk, and then, upon a signal from Mr. Fay, two strangers came forward, and the oath was administered to one and refused by the other, who wore a flapped hat and chose to affirm, — and two or three questions were asked by the government, and Mr. Pendleton stood up, — and Arthur was completely bewildered. The Major smiled, as the amount of bail was mentioned, and the prosecutor looked round upon the audience and bar with a triumphant smile — glancing at Mr. Fay, and then at the accused, and then at the bench, as if the question was about settled forever — at least in the mind of the judge, or he never would have required such heavy bail; but Mr. Fay was unmoved, and straightway the clerk began to read over the recognizance aloud, somewhat after the following fashion, "You — a — a — and each of you — George A. Pendleton, a — a — a — as principal, and you, William Bayard and Joseph E. Wentworth, a — a — as sureties, all of the city and state of New York, &c. &c., do hereby acknowledge yourselves to be held and firmly bound to the people of New York, &c. &c., you, and each of you — a — a — in the full and just sum of twenty thousand dollars, &c. &c., well and truly to be paid — a — a — a, &c. &c."

"Twenty thousand dollars!" exclaimed a gray-haired, sour-faced old gentleman, touching Mr. Fay on the elbow.

"Twenty thousand dollars!" cried two or three of the junior members, gathering about Mr. Fay, all whispering together, and suggesting that, of course, he would apply to have the bail reduced, — that such a thing had never been heard of, that unreasonable bail was unconstitutional, &c. &c.

But Mr. Fay — the mysterious man — rather appeared to enjoy the idea. Not the least objection was offered, — not a symptom of uneasiness could be discovered; — on the whole, perhaps,

it was rather creditable to his client that, under the circumstances, he should be able to find such bail, and for so large an amount; and it was clear that Mr. Fay looked upon it as a feather in the cap of his client, and calculated to neutralize any unfavorable inference, likely to arise from the magnitude of the sum required.

On hearing the names of William Bayard and Joseph E. Wentworth coupled with that of George A. Pendleton, Arthur looked at his uncle for explanation; but a nod, somewhat perplexing and hurried, was all he got in reply.

Nevertheless, he began to see his way out. For a time, as the elder of the two was under examination by Mr. Attorney, justifying under oath, as they called it, he was very much struck by two slight circumstances. The venerable man, — venerable in spite of his age, — for now he did not appear to be more than fifty, wore his hat; and when asked to hold up his hand, flatly refused, saying he affirmed. But while Arthur was watching the procedure that followed, and recalling the conversation they had together in Chambers Street, and afterwards at the St. Nicholas, he was wondering at himself that he had never happened to think of questioning his mother, when they were by themselves, about Mr. Bayard, the early friend of his father, — and, as he had much reason to hope, of his mother, — although he would not acknowledge it, even to himself, till he knew more of the circumstances. He had thought of doing so, times without number, when he was away from her.

The question of bail being settled, Mr. Fay touched his client's elbow, and beckoning to Arthur, told him he would find the carriage waiting at the entrance.

The Major rose, and bowing to the bench and bar, slowly withdrew; the crowd making way for him, and the eyes of bench and bar following him, with evident interest and admiration.

Mr. Fay followed; and taking Arthur aside, warned him, in a whisper, to look out for the evening papers.

The caution was understood and appreciated by Arthur, and overheard by his uncle.

"Nonsense, Arthur!" said the Major. "Now that the bitterness of death is past, why need we care about the newspapers? Ten thousand thanks to you, my dear Sir," he added, grasping

Mr. Fay's hand, with a somewhat unreasonable earnestness, — "I care nothing about the newspapers, I assure you. I never did, for myself, where my conscience did not upbraid me; and just now, as I mean to have the first telling of the story at home, — where they might do mischief, — and before I sleep, I am not afraid of them on account of my sister and niece."

They had now reached the door; and as Arthur looked up, he saw before him, not only Mr. Bayard, but in Mr. Bayard the very man who had so puzzled and astonished them at the prayer-meeting in Fulton Street. The plentiful white hair — like raw silk — and the broad beaver, and the knee-breeches, and the shoe-buckles, and the large gold-headed cane, were all of a piece now; and he saw just how he had been misled; but before he could speak to him, he had vanished.

"Can you dine with us to-morrow, Mr. Fay?" inquired the Major, as they parted.

"No, my dear Sir. I am too busy just now; but I will run over the first leisure evening, and have the talk I threatened with you, Sir," — nodding at Arthur.

"We dine at five; and if you will take a bed with us, you may get back in season for your duties on the morrow, as well as if you had remained over night, in your lodgings at the Clarendon."

"Well, well; I dare not promise, and you must not look for me; but come I shall, sooner or later, for I have something on my mind."

"Something on his mind!" thought Arthur, as they rode slowly toward the ferry. "I shouldn't wonder! but perhaps the gentleman may find, after he gets there, that other people have something on their minds too."

"Why, Arthur! — are you beside yourself?" said his uncle.

"Beside myself! how do you mean, pray?"

"Thinking aloud, — as if you were altogether alone; talking to yourself, as to a stranger!"

"Did I?" — blushing and laughing, — "I am afraid you are half right, Uncle George; for within the last few weeks I have been charged with dreaming aloud, by mother and Julia, — and even by Mr. Fay himself;" and then he told what had happened on their way into the city.

The Major could not help smiling aloud, in reply, — for it was no laugh; it was, at most, only a sort of inward rippling, like that of hidden waters, making themselves heard, like subterranean music, in a low, pleasant murmur; but Arthur was delighted.

"My good uncle!" he cried, with a burst of enthusiasm, "I don't know when I have seen you look so happy!"

"No wonder! I have not felt so happy for a twelvemonth."

"You are beginning to look like yourself once more; and I see plainly that our new cottage-life is going to be our happiest life. All we have wanted, to tell you the truth, Uncle George, was to see you happy, — and then, of course, we should follow suit."

"You are very kind, Arthur; and I hope to be wiser, and in time happier."

"I have heard you say, Uncle George, that no living man has a right to be unhappy, — or to make others unhappy, — for 'why should a living man complain?' You are certainly growing wiser, now; for, in the very midst of the terrible business we have just got through with — I hope forever — you have been more cheerful than at any time for the last year. Hitherto, and up to the beginning of this month, when your arrangements were completed, for giving up the house, and stealing away into the country, you have appeared, most of the time, so changed, — so unlike yourself, — so indifferent about everything that happened either to yourself or others, — and at other times would appear so bewildered, and so completely lost, — that we dreaded to hear you speak, lest we should find — as we often did, after you had got through, and we came to question you — that you might as well have been overheard talking in your sleep."

"Like my nephew, hey?"

"Very much like your nephew, in that particular, I must acknowledge; but then — excuse me — I hope your nephew has never looked to you as you have to us, day after day, like a man going to his own funeral, and saying with a voice like a dirge, half a dozen times a day, 'how much we always have to be thankful for!'"

"You are right, Arthur," patting his nephew on the shoulder. "I have been both wicked and foolish. It is very true that I

have always had, in the midst of my heaviest and sorest trials, enough to be thankful for, if I would only bear it in mind; but somehow, I am beginning to understand of late, as I never did before, with all my preaching, — that preaching is one thing, and practice another."

All this, and much more, was said so cheerfully and so pleasantly, — notwithstanding the settled seriousness of look which immediately followed, — that Arthur was encouraged to go farther, — much farther, — and even to question him, — though afar-off, and with a feeling of uneasiness that grew more and more troublesome every hour, about Mr. Fay.

"He managed that ugly business very much to your satisfaction, Sir, — judging by your looks. I did not quite understand his manœuvring, I must acknowledge; but then I saw that you did, and I felt easy. All arranged beforehand between you, I dare say."

"No, indeed; one might as well undertake to arrange a game of chess beforehand. Nor did I know what he intended to do, or rather, how he meant to play the game; for everything depended upon the moves made by the prosecutor. All I knew was, that, like young Morphy, when he sat down to the board, he meant to beat; and knowing what I did of him, I believed he would beat, — and almost took it for granted."

"By this, am I to understand that you have nothing more to fear? that, although you are under bail for twenty thousand dollars, — a thing unheard of, as that old gentleman at my elbow said, who appeared to be listened to with the greatest deference by the brethren, — you feel no uneasiness whatever as to the issue?"

"None whatever. All we want is time — time; not so much for myself though, as for others; and that we must have."

"A wonderful man, that Mr. Winthrop Fay; wonderfully clever, I mean; a great manager, and *so* smooth, and *so* plausible."

"Yes, Arthur, and I am sorry you don't like him."

"Don't like him, Sir! what could have put such an idea into your head?"

"Poh, poh, Arthur, you can't deceive me. You are too open-hearted, — you think too much aloud."

"And talk too much in my sleep, hey?"

"Or at least, you talk too much to yourself, where you are sometimes overheard, to make it an easy thing for you to mislead them that know you, and love you."

"*Love* me, Uncle George!"

"Ay, my lad, *love* you," replied the Major, with great emphasis, touched by the mournful earnestness of the question; "for some do, — notwithstanding your faults, your waywardness, and your changeableness, — and allow me to add, your most unreasonable and capricious levity at times, which is undermining your strength of character, and which, if not speedily overcome, will break our hearts — *there!* — I have long wanted to say this, and now, thank God! it is off my mind!"

"And *on* mine, I hope," said Arthur, catching his uncle's hand. "On mine I hope, forever and ever! How much I *do* thank you for your plain dealing! You at least, understand me, — and you, I dare say, love me, — and so does my dear mother, and would lay down her life for me; and so would poor Charles, any day; but — but" — and his voice faltered, and the quaver went to his uncle's heart — "I have nobody else to love me."

His uncle made no reply; but a strong pressure of the hand went far to satisfy the nephew that he was understood.

A short silence followed; and after they had crossed the ferry, the Major went back to the business in hand, as if to pass away the time, and turn off poor Arthur's thoughts from a painful subject.

"Not only a wonderfully clever man, and a great manager, but a man of high principle."

"Of high principle, Sir!"

"For a lawyer, I mean."

"O, I understand. You separate the lawyer from the man, I see, just as Mr. Fay would have you do."

"Certainly. It is but fair, under the present condition of things. I am no friend to conventional morality, but somehow, we are all ready to slip into the traces when they are offered; and if I happen to see a high-minded, honorable man saying or doing as a lawyer, what he would never say, nor do, as a man, or doing

that for another, as a client, which he would never do for himself, I, for one, feel obliged to make some allowances."

"Allowances for what, Uncle George?"

"For the prejudices of education."

"That is, if I understand you, for the prejudices of a professional education."

"Precisely."

"But Uncle George — excuse me, — why should not the professional education of jockeys, or gamblers, or horse-thieves, entitle their prejudices to some consideration?"

The Major had been caught napping for once; and acknowledged it, with a hearty laugh, the first for many a long month.

"And by the way," continued Arthur, "do tell me who that strange-looking Mr. Bayard is?"

"I am rather inclined to believe, my boy, that you do not require to be told, if I may judge by your eyes. After the meeting near Burton's Theatre, and the interview that followed at the St. Nicholas, and especially after what happened at the Fulton Street meeting the other day, you ought to feel somewhat acquainted with him; and if you will ask your mother when you are alone, and there is no danger of interruption, she may be willing to tell you what I dare not."

"*Dare* not, Sir!"

"Even so. But thus much I can say, and will say. He is one of the worthiest men alive; and I am chiefly indebted to him — perhaps altogether — for my present safety, though I never saw him in my life, till we met in Chambers Street, and was never acquainted with him, till this affair brought him to my help."

"How strange!"

"Yes, Arthur, it is indeed strange, very strange; and to tell you the truth, I am perplexed and troubled, whenever I think of what has happened, since he first fell in our way. Sometimes I feel a sort of superstitious terror — almost as if I were haunted."

"*You*, Uncle George! *you*, of all men living!"

"Nevertheless, the fact is not to be denied. There is a mystery about the man, which I do not understand — which I cannot possibly fathom. He knows too much about us — and much

more, I find by here and there a word he lets drop, than he is willing to acknowledge. That he was an early and fast friend of your father, and sorely tried in some way, by that friendship, I know from your mother; but she chooses to avoid the subject with me, and I am unwilling to question her, as you may do without being troublesome, or appearing either curious or inquisitive."

"I don't know that, Uncle George. After what you have said, I should be unwilling to question my dear mother about so mysterious a personage. 'Every heart knoweth its own bitterness, and a stranger intermeddleth not therewith.'"

"Judge for yourself, my dear Arthur," continued his uncle. "Your mother is not a woman to withhold from you, her beloved son — her only son, and she a widow — any good thing;" and then after musing awhile, he added, "but, as I have said before, I do not understand the relationship he seems to bear to the family. He knows everything we do, or have done, I believe, since the day we first met; he has followed us, and watched over us, from the hour when he detected in you that resemblance to your mother, as if he had the deepest interest in our welfare. He comes and goes — appears and disappears — like a shadow, and without any good reason, so far as I can judge; and yet, when most needed, he never fails to be found at my elbow — and always in the very nick of time."

"Just let me look at the ring I see there," interrupted Arthur, reaching out his hand. "No, no, not the ring on your watch-guard — the great ugly signet-ring you wear on the third finger of your left hand."

The Major was about drawing it off, looking somewhat puzzled at the suddenness of the request, when Arthur caught his hand, with a whimsical, half-serious look of alarm, and exclaimed, "Not for the world, Sir!"

"What on earth are you at now, Arthur Maynard!"

"Why, Uncle George, you might rub it, or chafe it, you know, in drawing it off."

"Well, and if I did happen to rub it, or chafe it, in drawing it off, what then?"

"Well, I wouldn't answer for the consequences."

"What *do* you mean, Arthur?"

"Why, bless your heart, Uncle George. How do you know but it may be a talisman?"

"Pshaw!"

"And really, I don't wonder you are troubled — and feel as if you were haunted; I should be frightened to death, to be left alone with such a monster; I should always wear a glove on that hand, as you often do, I see — and sleep in it, and never take it off, without taking off the ring with it, most carefully."

"Poh, poh, have done with such nonsense!"

But Arthur was in no humor to have done with such nonsense. How happy he did feel, to be sure! and how his countenance lighted up, as he continued, with flashing eyes, —

"To tell you the truth, Uncle George, though I am not often troubled with superstitious terrors, I shouldn't much like to have a third party turn up all at once at my elbow, while we were riding together by ourselves, just because you happened to chafe that ring — a silver-haired man, with a flapped hat, and flaming eyes, and a — a ——"

"Oh, you are incorrigible! there is no stopping you, when you once get agoing!"

"But I say, Uncle George, who was that other man — that Mr. Wentworth — who happened in with our spectre friend, in the single-breasted coat and breeches, and just in the nick of time?"

"Really, I do not know. There is another mystery which I have been trying to clear up; but all to no purpose. When I first heard the name, I was a little curious to know if he had anything to do with that Miss Wentworth — or Aunt Marie, as they call her — with whom we had the negotiation about the house. You remember her, I dare say?"

"Remember her! — I wonder if I shall ever forget her! The poor old chattering simpleton!"

"Have a care, Arthur! We may be sorry for all this, — we may have wronged her much, — and, between ourselves, though I do not know, yet I am strongly inclined to believe, that she and this very Mr. Wentworth, if not relations, are at least well acquainted, and acting together; for when I was about to inquire of my friend Mr. Fay, who had a long list of names to offer the

prosecutor, when the question of bail should come up, who Mr. Wentworth was, he stopped me with a touch and a look, which called my attention to a door, in a distant part of the room, where I saw the face of Aunt Marie herself, or I am very much mistaken, pressed hard up to the glass, with her nose flattened, and the door ajar."

Arthur could not help laughing at the picture.

"But, although I do not know who Mr. Wentworth is, nor how he 'happened to turn up', as you call it, in the very nick of time, this I do know, that no questions were asked, and that the arrangements were all made between Mr. Fay and our phantom bail, without consulting me. Ah! I had no idea we were coming so fast. Stop, coachman! stop, if you please; what say you to alighting, Arthur, before they hear the noise of the wheels, and walking by yonder pathway — which is not overlooked, you see, by any of the windows — and going up softly, and taking them by surprise?"

"With all my heart — here goes!"

And out he sprang, followed by the Major, and telling the coachman to "be off, and drive slow," without making any noise, till he turned into the highway.

As they stood awhile together, considering how they should approach the house without being observed, Arthur's attention was suddenly arrested by a flash, and by the quick motion of his uncle's hand as he adjusted the fur collar of his cloak; and he exclaimed, with a start and a flourish worthy of almost any stage, "This handkerchief did an Egyptian to my mother give!"

"There you go again!" said the Major, beginning to feel somewhat annoyed. "What the plague are you at now? — I should be glad to know."

"Arthur pointed at the ring, and appeared to be gasping for breath. The talisman! the talisman!" said he, "beware!"

"Confound the boy! I have no patience with you! What is there in that ring to amuse you so much, and to set you raving in this way, whenever you happen to be in the humor for a frolic, — unreasonable, or untimely, or otherwise?"

"Dear Uncle George — how do I know?"

"Be serious, Arthur, if you can, for five minutes."

"One question first, and I will do anything you say. I have always wondered at your wearing that strange-looking, unshapely abomination where everybody can see it, and must see it; and almost always carrying that hand ungloved."

"Pshaw!"

"A vow, perhaps?"

"Arthur!"

"Look here!" — taking his uncle's hand, and lifting it so that he could the better examine the odd fashioning of the signet, as if he had never seen it before, — "intertwisted green serpents, — loathsome and scaly, — with carbuncles for eyes!"

"Rubies, — not carbuncles."

"The wickedest eyes I ever saw — out of a woman's head!"

"Come, come, Arthur; we may find your mother and poor Julia much more uncomfortable than we have supposed."

"True; but ——"

"But what, pray?"

"I do wish I knew where you got that ring, and what on earth it is good for? I have always wanted to know."

"Upon my word, Arthur Maynard, I hardly know what to say to you. You never know where to stop."

"You haven't answered my question, though, my good uncle."

"That ring, Arthur Maynard, once belonged to your father!"

Somewhat alarmed at the cloud he saw gathering upon the forehead of his uncle, and at the solemnity of his manner, the poor boy grew pale as death; and so serious, that his lashes were glistening, before the answer was finished.

"Once it contained a drop of poison so deadly, that if this little spring were touched with the point of a knife, and the smallest portion of the drop reached the tongue, it was death, — instantaneous death; — it were safer to be bitten by the deadliest of living serpents; the asp, the rattlesnake, or the cobra-capello."

Arthur grew paler and paler; and but for the hand he continued holding by — under pretence of examining the rubies — he would have staggered.

"And that ring," continued the Major, "your father withdrew from the secret drawer where it had lain for many a year, only the day before he breathed his last, and sent it to me; charging

me to wear it as long as I lived; to bequeath it to you; — which I have already done by a will, made the very next day after I received it, on my return from South America; — and to say to you, at a proper time, that your father owed his life to that ring."

"God forgive me!" exclaimed poor Arthur, trembling from head to foot. "I have had my suspicions, — I have seen my mother grow pale, when she looked at that ring, — I have seen you wear a glove upon that hand, in our presence — a large unsightly glove — and more than once have I seen your handkerchief or napkin flung over it, when we were at the table; and as Julia knew nothing about it, and my dear mother never mentioned it, I determined to find out for myself. Can you forgive me?"

"With all my heart, Arthur. But beware! ask me no more questions about the ring. Hereafter, when the greater mystery involved comes to be cleared up, I may have something to communicate, which, if told now, might hinder your sleeping."

Arthur stood abashed and silent for awhile.

"One question more," said he at last, "only one, dear uncle; and that ring shall never be mentioned again by me while I breathe."

"Well, what is it?"

"Have you any good reason for believing that it ever belonged to Tippoo Saib?"

"Before I answer that question, allow me to ask if you ever heard such a thing suggested?"

"Uncle George, I must be frank with you. In a rough draft of my father's will, drawn a few weeks before his death, mention is made of Tippoo Saib's ring. It is there called a signet; and the box which contained it was never to be opened but in your presence; and afterward, when the will itself was drawn, as the signet was not mentioned, I was a little anxious to know what had become of it."

"How much better to have come directly to me, and put the question, dear Arthur."

"Perhaps; and yet, I was unwilling to appear inquisitive about such a trifle; and but for the mystery, and the name of Tippoo Saib, I dare say I should never have thought of the

matter again, till reminded by the ugliness of the jewel, which a man like you must have a strange reason for wearing so ostentatiously."

"Well, then, that you may have no more of these unhallowed misgivings to keep you awake, or spoil your sleep, dear Arthur, I will acknowledge to you, that your father always believed that the 'little monster,' as he called it, had once belonged to Tippoo Saib, who carried the drop of poison just here — touching the serpent's head — as being of little value, instead of concealing it, as other Indian princes did theirs, in their costlier ornaments, brooches, or dagger-hilts, or bracelets, which were more likely to be taken away; so that, if they should happen to fall into the hands of the British at Seringapatam, death would always be within their reach, — death instantaneous and certain, as by a thunderbolt. And the story goes, that this ring was found upon Tippoo Saib's hand, as they pulled the body out from underneath a heap of the slain, by a Sepoy, who hawked it about the British camp after the surrender, and that it came into the possession of Colonel Boyd, afterwards General Boyd, of the American army, who brought it with him on his return to America, and gave it to your father for a keepsake."

"Enough, dear uncle; I am satisfied."

CHAPTER XII.

CAUTIOUSLY, slowly, and with a noiseless tread, they stole through the narrow, unfrequented path, until they reached the end-steps of the piazza, where Arthur stopped for a moment near a large, heavily curtained window, and making a sign to the Major, began to reconnoitre.

Within were Mrs. Maynard and Julia, sitting together upon a sofa drawn up to the fire; Julia leaning upon her aunt, with hands clasped and resting in her lap, and the aunt, with one arm about Julia's waist, and eyes that seemed overcharged with tears.

"This will never do!" whispered the Major. "We must give up the idea of taking them by surprise. I never saw your mother with that look before — so helpless and so hopeless — nor Julia so wretched, and so dependent. Look at her hands — how pale and how lifeless they are! Something must have happened, Arthur — ah! a sob! — my sister Elizabeth actually sobbing, with that poor girl's head resting upon her shoulder!"

At this moment, Mrs. Maynard reached out her hand, trembling with weakness, or with deep emotion, and took an open letter from the table.

"Hush! — don't move for your life, — the window must be open, for I distinctly hear the rustling of that paper."

"Right," said Arthur, touching his uncle on the shoulder, and pointing toward the window, which opened in two parts like doors, and was not properly fastened. "What carelessness!" he added, in a whisper; "we must look to this ourselves; I never much liked these French windows."

The voice of Julia was now heard, faint, low, and almost wailing. "How do you understand it? can there be any other meaning, dear aunt?"

"No, my poor child; I can see no other meaning; it would be irreverent, and wholly unlike brother George, and out of place, if not accepted as we first understood it," — reading over the note in a low, sweet, trembling voice, — "'Let not your hearts be troubled. Ye believe in God, believe also in *me!*'"

"The very note I sent them by Mr. Fay," whispered the Major; "I hope they understood it, as intended, — hush!"

"Certainly! the language is clear," said Mrs. Maynard, as if in reply to her brother; "it must mean just that, and nothing else," — locking her hands and lifting them up in silent prayer, — "I am perfectly satisfied now, and really wonder at my own childish misgiving, dear Julia; and all the more, that while you were casting yourself upon me, in a measure — and while God was strengthening you — I should have become so utterly powerless, on hearing the dreadful secret you have kept so long buried in your own heart. Yes, my brother — my dear, *dear* brother — we will accept the interpretation, and be comforted!"

"Thank God!" whispered the Major, wiping his eyes, and turning away from the window.

"Inasmuch as we believe in God, therefore will we believe in *thee!* my poor brother!" she added, in a more cheerful tone.

Arthur clasped his uncle's hand in reply, but neither of them spoke or moved. Their hearts were too full for speech.

"But how wearily the day drags on," said Julia, looking at her watch; "only half-past two! — surely we must hear something of him, or get a message, before night."

"No, Julia, so long as we do not hear of him, and no message is received, I shall be looking for him; — ah! didn't I hear a step on the piazza?"

The brother could forbear no longer. With the strong tread of manly self-reliance, he walked up to the door followed by Arthur.

A slight scream followed — a brief, hurried, bustling movement within — the sound of a distant bell from below — the front door flew open — the hall-doors — the parlor-door — and the next moment brother and sister were locked in each other's arms, with Julia and Arthur standing near, afraid to speak or move,

till they found themselves all kneeling together in silent prayer, with their faces covered.

Then there followed a low, distant, half-smothered, convulsive sobbing — many tears — and much heaving of the shoulders — but no word of speech — nothing but the deep, heavy, labored breathing of hearts overcharged with thankfulness, and joy, and self-reproach, for unexpected, and almost unhoped-for deliverance. Like the friends of Peter, they had been praying, and hoping, and believing, and *expecting* the prison-doors to be opened, as they thought, or tried to think; and yet, as when Peter knocked at the door, and his praying friends chose to believe it was only his spirit, so the poor sister, and the poor, patient, hopeful, suffering Julia could hardly believe their own eyes, when the liberated prisoner appeared.

After sitting together in the perfect stillness of happy hearts, hand in hand for awhile, the brother and sister tranquillized, and even Julia and Arthur beginning to feel better acquainted, and somewhat inclined to fall back upon their old footing, where each might study the countenance of the other, and puzzle out the hidden meaning of many a shifting shadow, as it came up from the innermost depths below, and floated away like a swift summer-cloud over still waters, or drifted slowly over forehead, mouth, and eyes, and never quite clearing off.

Arthur, perplexed and embarrassed, and Julia wondering at her own changeableness, and feeling somewhat uneasy at Arthur's grave, thoughtful manner, were glad to be listeners to the conversation that followed, between the brother and sister.

"You must not question me further, dear Elizabeth," said he, kissing her forehead, and liberating her hand, as he finished the history of the day. "You are now acquainted with all the facts."

The sister seemed to think otherwise, for she smiled sorrowfully, and shook her head.

"All the facts I mean, which I am at liberty to communicate. Julia has kept nothing back, I see; and now, all I desire of you, my beloved sister, of you, dear Julia, and of you, Arthur, is, that you will continue to believe in me."

"I will! — we do! — we do!" answered they, all together.

"When you are troubled with misgivings, when your faith in me begins to give way — no matter for what reason — all I ask is, that you will come to me at once, and say so, and I will satisfy you — *if I can*."

"If you can, brother!"

"And what more could I promise? Whatever concerns myself only, whatever I can do, or say, for your comfort and relief, without betraying others, that you may depend upon."

"And beyond that, we would not have you go, a single hair's breadth," said Mrs. Maynard, looking at Julia for confirmation.

"Certainly not," said Julia.

"But then, we are all so fond of mystery," continued her aunt, with a significant smile. "It seems to run in our blood."

"We have so much whispering and telegraphing, and always have had, ever since I can remember," said Arthur, with a faint laugh, "that, really, I hardly know how to behave, where people seem to mean just what they say, nor how to understand the downright, straightforward plain-dealing of the very few I meet with, who are only gifted with plain common sense, and appear to be wholly unacquainted with management and mystery."

Julia bit her lip.

"Some people seem to go through the world on tiptoe, like listeners and eavesdroppers; and if they talk to you about the weather, take you aside, and lower their voices to a whisper; and grow confidential, and wary of all bystanders, if they happen to like the fit of your gloves, and wish to know where they are to be had. They are of those who 'cannot take their tea without a stratagem.'"

Julia drew her chair a little further off, and Uncle George and Mrs. Maynard exchanged a smile, as Arthur continued, with a flushed face, and eyes alarmingly bright, —

"In our family, from my earliest recollection, doors were always opening of themselves; notes, mysteriously worded, were flying about; strangers were coming and going, to no purpose; and listeners were found lurking about the house, at all hours, night and day."

"Listeners, Arthur!"

"Yes, dear mother. I do not speak of the family now; nei-

ther you nor father would ever be guilty of listening, any more than of reading other people's letters; but surely, you have not forgotten how much of this work was done by the servants, nor how many we had to discharge. For my own part, I must acknowledge that for two years before my father's death, I felt as if we were under *surveillance;* that a system of *espionage* was at work in our very midst, and that, in one way or another, all our movements were known, and our most hidden purposes anticipated. I appeal to you, Uncle George, and to you, dear mother."

"Some truth, I must acknowledge, in what you say, dear Arthur; but you are so full of exaggeration and embellishment — or of what you call poetry — that we must make large allowances, — we must indeed."

"When I am not perfectly serious, mother; but now I am serious; but you do not answer me, Uncle George?"

Uncle George's countenance changed — a cloud passed over it — and for a moment he was almost gloomy; and then his eyes filled.

"There is indeed much truth in what you say, nephew; and we have all suffered from the disposition you speak of; and no person more than your father. Constitutional with him at first, I dare say, and perhaps with your mother also, it became a settled habit with *you*, before we saw the consequences. We are strangely constituted. Mystery begets mystery; and a very little derangement of the digestive organs, or the nerves, from a neglected cold, or an overworked brain, may change our opinions, unsettle our hopes, and so disturb the wholesome current of our blood, that we may come to be afraid of ourselves, — and even afraid to be left alone. You have always looked upon me as a man of great firmness, great bodily strength, of sound health, and a serene temper, and wholly beyond such influences, — but we have all been mistaken. I have misunderstood my own character. I have no such self-reliance, no such self-sustaining power, as I have always had credit for; — to tell you the truth, I have grown afraid of shadows, and what is more, of myself; so that I am almost afraid to be left alone."

Touched by the tender sadness of her uncle's voice, Julia drew

up her little chair, and taking his hand between hers, leaned upon his knee, with her large melancholy eyes fixed upon his; while Arthur sat where he could see every movement, and study the changes of her wonderful countenance without being suspected.

The conversation was continued, hour after hour, at intervals; but Arthur could not help observing, without a word in relation to what was now uppermost in his mind. It seemed a little strange that nothing should have been said of Mr. Bayard; though perhaps that might be accounted for, by the unwillingness of Uncle George to enter upon the mysterious past; — but why was the name of Mr. Fay so carefully avoided? Not a question had been asked, not a reference made to him, nor to his management and behavior, from first to last. Was that subject reserved, by common consent, for private consideration, when he should be out of the way? Or was it only overlooked, or forgotten, for awhile?

It might be unfounded suspicion; but he could not help thinking that Julia was a little disappointed; and that now, while she sat there, watching with such eagerness every shadow that passed over the large rocky forehead of her uncle, without opening her mouth, it was in the expectation, if not in the hope, of hearing what Mr. Fay had been doing, after his interview with her, and what her uncle thought of him. But if so — why not introduce the subject? why not question her uncle? or at least, mention the name of Mr. Fay?

Poor Arthur! Growing more and more uncomfortable, the more he thought of all that had happened, he drew out his watch at last, and, as he could not hope to steal away without being missed, in the dead silence that followed, he went to the window, and after looking out awhile, as if studying the sky, proposed to take a stroll over the grounds, if his mother had no objection, — breathe a little fresh air, and be back in season for dinner.

"By all means, dear Arthur, it will do you good; and Julia, my love, just take your bonnet and shawl, and thick shoes, and go with him. The *grounds* are not very extensive, to be sure, but there is a plenty of well-trodden highway; and as we are no longer obliged to dress for dinner, nor to sit up for company, you will have time for a good long walk."

Arthur was delighted; and when Julia jumped up, and ran off to get her shawl, just as if nothing had ever happened to trouble their pleasant intercourse, he began to take himself to task for being so unreasonable; and when they were together once more, and he felt her arm resting, as of old, upon his, with now and then a slight trembling, as they hurried over the intermediate enclosure, and entered upon the highway — though nothing was said by either, for both were thinking of other days, and running over the incidents of the last few months, and almost wondering at themselves, that they should be found together once more in such a pleasant relationship — Arthur began to feel somewhat ashamed of himself; and was just on the point of saying as much, when they were startled by the sound of a carriage that came whirling round the corner, and drew up within a yard or two of them.

"Why, bless me!" cried somebody within, — dropping the glass, and looking out, — "if here isn't Miss Parry herself! How do you do, my dear? Good morning, Mr. Maynard! Sallie, my love, ——"

And then, the door flew open, and Miss Wentworth leaned out, with Sallie looking over her shoulder, and begged to know if Mrs. Maynard was at home, and if that was the Maynard cottage, — pointing, — and whether Miss Julia and Mr. Maynard were to be gone long on their walk?

"Not long," said Julia; wondering what business could have brought Miss Wentworth so far, after what had happened.

"The Major is well, I hope?" continued Miss Wentworth.

"Very well, thank you, Madam," said Arthur. "You will find him with my mother."

"Well, well; good morning. Won't detain you; only please to remember, if you do not get back in season, that our visit is to you, my dear," — bowing to Julia, — "as well as to your aunt; whom, by the way, we are all dead in love with, — arn't we, Sallie?"

"Of course. Good morning! good morning!"

Here was another mystery! But then, there was nothing portentous — nothing to be dreaded — if they might judge by the pleasant voices, and very pleasant looks of these two women,

against whom both had been so prejudiced but a little time before.

"Cousin Arthur," said Julia, after a long, thoughtful pause, "I am afraid we have wronged these people."

"And so am I, Cousin Julia; and if you knew all that I know, you would feel sorry — if not ashamed — as I do, for having permitted myself to judge of their characters by the little that transpired in that first morning's interview; frivolous they may be, and rather troublesome, perhaps, but I do not believe them heartless."

"You forget, Arthur, how much we knew of them before."

"How much, Julia! how *little*, you mean; for what knew you, except of these outward peculiarities, or at second hand, of Miss Wentworth's real character? Let me tell you that I have reason to believe we are under the greatest obligations to her; I cannot go into particulars, but when you hear them related by Uncle George, I know you will agree with me."

"More mystery, Arthur?"

"Yes, dear Julia, more mystery. But you saw her look of kindness when she spoke of my mother, and of the Major — of natural kindness, too — and 'one touch of nature makes the whole world kin,' you know."

"Well, Arthur — I am in no hurry; I can bide my time — only this, I cannot help saying; that, after what happened about the house, when Uncle George threw up the bargain so handsomely, and she left us holding her handkerchief to her eyes, and followed by her man of the law, stepping so softly, and looking so happy, as if they had out-generalled — or overreached, or outwitted — our dear, good uncle; I took such a sudden and violent dislike to that woman, that I am half afraid to trust myself with her, notwithstanding what you say."

"How unlike you, and how unworthy of you, dear Julia, are these prejudices."

"Thank you, Cousin Arthur; from the bottom of my heart I do thank you; for now do I know that you are my friend."

"Your friend, Julia, — have you ever doubted me?"

"Yes, — and with good reason, I think; but we have no time now; and this, you will acknowledge, is not exactly the place for

such discussions, — let us return;" — looking at her watch — "we shall have to walk fast; and it would be such a pity, if we were to begin our new housekeeping arrangements behind time."

Their walk was continued in silence, till they reached a pathway leading to the rear of the cottage-grounds, where they caught a glimpse of the carriage, as it rolled off toward the highway they had just left.

"I wish I knew," said Arthur, after a long season of thoughtfulness, "what on earth I have said — or done — to make you doubt my friendship, Cousin Julia."

"Or omitted, Cousin Arthur?"

"Yes, Julia, — or omitted. You frighten me, though."

"'The wicked flee when no man pursueth.'"

"Julia!"

"'The sound of a shaken leaf shall chase them!'"

"What *do* you mean, Julia? There is no playfulness in your speech, though I see it in your eyes."

"'A wounded spirit, who can bear?'"

"Not I, by my faith, Cousin Julia; and I insist on your explaining yourself."

"Be patient, Arthur; all in good time. There's my hand."

Arthur took the hand, — "Bless you!" — and before he well knew what he was doing, had lifted it to his lips.

Julia colored to the eyes; but just then, happening to look up, she snatched it away, for the first time in all her life, though it was no such uncommon offence; for she caught a view of her aunt and uncle standing at the window, with the curtains pushed a little aside.

But Arthur saw nothing of this; and when she snatched away her hand so impatiently — coquettishly, he would have called it, if another had done so, after all that had happened — he grew very serious and very thoughtful.

"We are friends now, I hope?" said he, after a short pause.

"I hope so, too; and, if we have a good opportunity this evening, I mean to put your friendship to the proof."

They had now reached the back piazza, and were soon seated round a comfortable, cheap, and well-appointed dinner; where they learned, somewhat to the surprise of both, — notwithstand-

ing all they had ventured to hope, while reproaching themselves for their unreasonable and hasty dislike, — that Miss Wentworth and her showy niece had come to acknowledge their acquaintance, and not to spy out the nakedness of the land, to intermeddle, by questioning or otherwise, nor to transact business with Uncle George.

"After all," said Aunt Elizabeth, who had never betrayed her opinion before, "after all, Miss Wentworth appears to be a kind-hearted gentlewoman; and though I do not feel acquainted with her niece, I must say that their behavior has been exceedingly proper and considerate."

"Are you quite sure they know what has happened, aunt?" said Julia.

"Quite sure, my love. There is no other way of explaining their visit or behavior; and your uncle appears to have other and better reasons for such a belief; so that I am really very glad to have that uncomfortable prejudice removed."

Julia looked at Arthur, and her lips moved, so that he almost understood her. At any rate, he saw in the cheerful, sunny light of her eyes, that she was thinking of the other reasons that Arthur had, for believing the visit meant in kindness and sympathy, and not in triumph, nor commiseration.

"We must learn to think better of human nature," said Aunt Elizabeth.

"Or rather, to think better of human beings, and worse of human nature," added Arthur, "and then you know, dearest mother, the less we expect, the more we shall be pleased with every symptom of goodness."

"Sound philosophy, my boy," added his uncle, with a slap on the back. "The more we expect of poor human nature, the more unreasonable we are, and the more cruelly disappointed at last."

What a pleasant evening that was, to be sure! "The world forgetting, by the world forgot;" a frugal dinner, such as they knew they might afford hereafter; a cheerful fire, a quiet house and a peaceful neighborhood; no rattling of drays or carriages — no screaming of newsboys — no beggars, and no thieves; no tiresome parties to worry through — no fashionable music to hear —

and with so much to be thankful for. The truth is, they had all come to their senses; and to be all together once more, and at home, was happiness enough. To sit round the fire, literally hand in hand, knowing the worst, and prepared for whatever might happen, so long as they could look up to their Great Father unabashed, and with a cheerful hope; to feel that, after all they had gone through with, they were not forsaken; that having withstood the temptations of the day, and triumphed worthily, there was none to molest nor make them afraid, — how could they be otherwise than happy?

"Would that poor Charles were here!" whispered Arthur, to Julia.

Startled by the suddenness and apparent strangeness of the remark, though nothing could have been more natural — for he, poor fellow, was the only missing member of that happy household — Julia turned anxiously to Arthur, and then to her Aunt Elizabeth, as if expecting to hear some explanation of the remark; but a sad smile, and a sorrowful shake of the head was the only reply.

Still she was not satisfied, and the moment they were left alone together, her uncle withdrawing, to throw himself upon a lounge after a sleepless night, and her Aunt Elizabeth, to find strength and help and consolation after the worry of the day, she turned toward Arthur, and touching him on the arm, as he sat looking into the fire, and lost in reverie, she asked what made him think of poor Charles just then?

"I am not at liberty to tell you."

"Another mystery, as I live!" said Julia; "but never mind, I am not very inquisitive — and as I threatened to try your friendship this evening, if I had a fair opportunity, I rather think I may be able to offset a mystery of my own worth half a score of yours, against all that appear to be gathering about our path, — but upon the express condition, that you are to be satisfied with what I may choose to communicate, and ask no questions; that you are to be patient and hopeful, and not give me up, Arthur Maynard, without good reasons, though you may not always be able to see your way clearly."

Julia tried to smile, but her lashes were wet, and her little

hand trembled, as she withdrew it hurriedly from what appeared to be an accidental touch of Arthur's.

"Can you be satisfied to go with me just so far, and no further? Can you believe in me, as Aunt Elizabeth believes in her brother George? so that, if I withhold the explanations you may desire, and refuse to be questioned, even where the questions are well meant, and proper in themselves, and such as you would have a right to ask, your faith in me will not be disturbed? I may be compelled, Cousin Arthur, not only to appear disobliging and unreasonable, but to *be* so; and before we take another step in the business I have in hand, where I want your help — as a brother — and must have it ——"

"As a brother? Oh, certainly."

"I desire to know if you think you would be able to trust me, notwithstanding appearances, if I should refuse to answer the most trivial questions, and what may be still harder to bear, considering our intimacy and relationship, if I should refuse to give a reason for not answering you? Take your time, Arthur — consider the question well — and then say yes or no."

Arthur sat still for five minutes, without speaking or moving; but, as the shadow of his chief trouble drifted away, the working of his fine features gave place to a beautiful expression of trust and hopefulness, and turning toward Julia, he said, with a solemnity and feeling worthy of a much older man, —

"Yes, Julia, I believe I may answer for myself. The conditions are hard — unreasonable, I think; and I have been sorely tried already by your silence, and by that of others very dear to me, and I ——" growing somewhat embarrassed, and speaking hurriedly, — "nevertheless, and there's my pledge," offering his hand, which that same Julia, who had just flung away at an accidental touch, now took between both of hers — "nevertheless, and notwithstanding all I have suffered, and all I fear, I answer *Yes*."

Another short and rather uncomfortable silence followed, neither being inclined to speak first, until Arthur moved his chair somewhat impatiently, as if wondering why the trial of his friendship, which had been set down for that very evening, if a good opportunity offered, and they could not well hope for a better, did not come on.

At last Julia spoke, though not in her natural voice. There was too much evident preparation, and something, he thought, of backwardness or unwillingness, overcome by a sense of duty.

"What think you of Mr. Fay?" said she.

Arthur caught his breath! A strange question, at best, but propounded in such a voice, and so abruptly, as if it had long been premeditated, and could be withheld no longer; it was absolutely startling.

"What do I think of Mr. Fay, Julia?"

Julia nodded; and lifting her eyes to his, waited patiently for the answer.

"Well then, if you must know, I will answer you in the fewest possible words — I don't like Mr. Fay."

"That is not the question, Arthur. I do not ask if you like Mr. Fay, but what you think of him."

Here was bold playing, to be sure, and Arthur was troubled for a moment; and then, that Julia should have nothing to boast of, nor to reproach him with hereafter, on the ground of dislike or concealment, he determined to be generous — to be magnanimous — to put a good face on the matter — trump the trick — and then lead trumps.

"I should think you had been familiar with legal questioning, Julia ——"

"I have," said she, interrupting him. "I have been sorely questioned and sorely tried, in a court of justice, and again by that Mr. Fay; and it was well for me that one of the first lessons I ever learned of my dear father was how to answer a question. Julia, he used to say, not one man in a hundred — not one woman in ten thousand — ever answers a question."

"And yet women and children make the best witnesses, they say."

"Yes — after they have learned how. My dear father had two rules, and but two; and by these, we were always governed, as I dare say you must have thought, when you found us all so very unreasonable ——"

"Or rather so very reasonable; for that was ever the fault of your whole family. Upon the most trivial occasions, you were

always so much upon your guard, so wary, and so unpleasantly exact and truthful."

"Thank you, Cousin Arthur!"

"But you have not mentioned the two rules. What were they?"

"The first was — Be sure that you understand the question before you answer it; and the second was — Be sure that you answer that very question, as you understand it, and no other; confining yourself to that, and answering neither more nor less than that very question may demand."

"Very proper, I dare say, but very tiresome, you must acknowledge, where people are not under oath."

"But we are always under oath — are we not, Cousin Arthur? If there be any difference between truth and falsehood — or if we are always bound to speak the truth ——"

"Perhaps; but in such a case what would become of poetry, and romance — or the exaggerations of eloquence — or the pleasantries of conversation — or the extravagances we all take so much pleasure in? Well might we go about the world asking what is truth ——"

"I cannot argue with you, Cousin Arthur; but I have something here that obliges me to speak the truth, or to be silent; something which forbids the very extravagance and exaggeration of which you speak ——"

"What would become of us, dear Julia, if we were all of your opinion? where would be our story-books — our magazine papers — our fables — nay, the very parables of our Saviour?"

Julia grew serious, but he continued, warming more and more with the subject.

"What of the grandest burst of Hebrew poetry? What is our imagination — our sense of the beautiful — our passionate longing for the vague and vast — for the unmanageable and the uplifting — for eloquence, and poetry, and song; what are all these appetites and yearnings given us for?"

"Very well, Cousin Arthur, I believe I must give way. You are so much of a poet yourself, that if I said more about the sacredness of unadulterated truth, I might appear to be growing personal; but you have not answered my question."

"Well, then, as I think I understand it, according to your first rule, I propose to answer it according to the second, without going aside a single hair's breadth from the obvious meaning of the language employed. I think Mr. Fay one of the most adroit and plausible men I ever met with, and a very clever lawyer."

"Indeed!"

"And neither more nor less! — there! — have I not fulfilled the conditions?"

Julia could not help laughing.

"And now for my turn, Julia. How do *you* like Mr. Fay?"

Poor Julia was evidently taken by surprise; but she answered without mincing the matter, and at once.

"I don't like him at all."

"And why not, pray?"

"I am too much afraid of him."

"Bravo, Julia! and to tell you the truth, so am I."

"Well, then, as we appear to be agreed upon that particular question, which, between ourselves, Cousin Arthur, had begun to grow embarrassing, after what you saw to-day, with your own eyes — I hope he told you how it happened, on the way in" — Arthur colored to the temples, and Julia herself was agitated, though she tried to carry it off with a pleasant smile; "and as we are not likely to be misunderstood hereafter, upon that particular question — we will go to another, before Aunt Elizabeth returns. Read this note, which I have long wanted to show you."

"Merciful Father! — why! it is the handwriting of poor Charles!"

"Read it aloud, if you please, and then we must have a consultation; for the matter may be growing serious — too serious for delay; and I have nobody to consult with, but you."

"Where is Uncle George? — Where is my dear mother, pray?"

"Read for yourself, and you will see, Cousin Arthur, how needful it is that they, of all persons alive, should know nothing of the affair at present."

The note was brief and hurried, but earnest; and the follow-

ing passages were dwelt upon by Julia at first, and by Arthur, afterward, with especial emphasis.

"You must see the poor child yourself, Julia — and you must learn to love her for my sake. If I am ever anything more than a hopeless reprobate, or a genteel vagabond — it will be owing to the influence of that child. She saved me once — but well nigh drove me to distraction, at last, when I had the means of living where I wanted to live, afar and apart from all my old associations, by refusing point blank to share my fate, unless I would first prove my strength, by giving up all my 'questionable habits' for a twelvemonth. Knowing what she was capable of, and astonished that one so young, and so loving, should undertake to manage me, as if I myself were a child — I left her — and I have never seen her since. But, Julia, dear Julia! I must see her again, and will, if I live; and if I should ever become worthy of her, she shall yet be the wife of your brother.

* * * * * *

"Mrs. Archibald is a very superior woman, truly religious, and truly conscientious, and for months I attributed poor Edith's unchangeable steadfastness to her influence; but I find I was mistaken. The mother would have been willing to trust the happiness of her only child to a comparative stranger, of 'questionable habits,' it must be acknowledged — for better for worse — but the child, I do believe in my heart, dear Julia, that innocent child loved me too much to throw away the only chance left for my reformation. God bless her for it! And God will bless her, I know, and it may be in the very way you so much desire. Pray for me, therefore! — pray for me, my dear sister, — and who knows but He may answer, and your brother be saved ——"

Here Arthur stopped for a moment, and wiped a blur from the paper, and then looked at the date, and then shook his head.

"All very encouraging, as you see," said Julia, with a faint smile, "though not perhaps just what we should have desired, a downwright miracle, in the shape of an immediate answer to the prayer we heard in Fulton Street."

"Other prayers had gone up, week after week, and month after month," said Arthur, "and while this very letter was on the

way, God may have been preparing us all — or rather *you* — for the answer now about to be vouchsafed. Stranger things have happened, Julia ——"

Her eyes filled; but she answered only with a sad, patient smile, and a sign for him to go on. He continued, —

"The mother will hand you this, and allow you to see my letters to her child. I have no concealment from you, my beloved sister; but Uncle George must know nothing of this, nor even Aunt Elizabeth, if she should happen to be with you. Arthur you may trust altogether. He is a noble-hearted, generous fellow ——." Arthur stopped short.

"Read on, Arthur, it will do you no harm. I might have stopped you before, I might have doubled down the page, or I might have read the letter myself, had I not wished you to understand my brother's whole heart, and to see how willing he is to trust you, *altogether*, in this very delicate business ——"

"No, no, Julia," said Arthur, in reply, "I love your brother too much, and I know him too well, to make it a very safe or pleasant thing for me to read his thoughts of me while afar off, like testimony from another world ——"

"Give me the letter then — stay! where were you? O, I see!" And then she read as follows: —

"Arthur you may trust altogether. He is a noble-hearted, generous fellow. Nobody appears to understand him — not even your mother. He counterfeits a thousand extravagances; he pretends to opinions, which he never seriously entertained in all his life, and sometimes argues for them, as for matters of life and death ——"

Here she glanced at Arthur somewhat archly, as if about to propound a question or two, upon this very point; whereupon he fidgeted in his chair, and fell a-drumming upon the back of another.

"But," she continued, still reading from the letter, "if I should say as much to him, I dare say he would quarrel with me on the spot ——"

Here Arthur changed the tune, and gave another twist in the chair.

"For I verily believe, dear Julia, that he does not know this,

and that he is under a sort of hallucination — a sort of a, what may be called a delusion, having breathed from his early boyhood the atmosphere of controversy ——"

"A pretty fellow," said Arthur, "to be lecturing me upon my fondness for controversy! He who never opens his mouth, but for disputation ——"

"All very true, Cousin Arthur, but hear what follows."

"In other words, he is too much like me. But I begin to grow weary of such things. I have no longer any desire of astonishing. I do not so much care to be thought wiser, as to be in fact better than people suppose. But enough; you may trust Arthur as you would me. He loves you — like a brother."

"Like a brother — yes — to be sure I do;" and the tune stopped, and Arthur sat facing Julia once more, with a strange look — a look almost of triumph, which haunted her, sleeping or waking, for many a month afterward.

"And you have said nothing to mother of all this?"

"Not a word."

"Nor to Uncle George?"

"Not a syllable."

"But how did you manage with her, that evening, when Mrs. Archibald came to see you, and you were with her so long in your chamber?"

"Manage, Arthur! I told her the simple truth; I said the mystery — for mystery is the very word, you know; nothing else will serve our turn — we live and breathe now in what may be called an atmosphere of mystery, as we are all ready enough to acknowledge, just as you and Charles live in an atmosphere of controversy; in short, I said to your dear mother, in so many words, that the mystery was committed to me in confidence, and that, until it should be cleared up, there was only one person alive, yourself, Arthur, whom it would be possible for me to communicate with."

"And what said she to this?"

"Well, if you insist on hearing ——"

"I do."

"She said you were only a boy ——"

"Only a boy!"

"Yes, Arthur, only a boy; but a boy with the heart of a strong man — a boy to be trusted in matters of life and death, however, and who only wanted one thing, to be a Christian hero ——"

"And what was that one thing, Julia — did she say?"

"The temper and experience of a Christian."

"Julia!"

"Well!"

"Perhaps, in that particular, she was right; and from my innermost soul, I do wish I had the temper and experience of a Christian!"

"Ask, and you shall receive, Arthur; such are the very words of encouragement, you know."

"So I hear, and so I try to believe."

"Knock, and it *shall* be opened unto you."

"I have knocked, Julia, but no answer has been vouchsafed."

"Seek, and ye *shall* find."

"I do seek — I will seek; but, oh, with how little encouragement! with how little of hope!"

"We have not, because we *ask* not, dear Arthur."

"One word, Julia, — there are some things that I do not understand in the teachings of our Saviour."

"Of course, how could it be otherwise? The teachings of the Saviour, being for all time, are adapted to human progress, and enough being plainly taught for the guidance of the simple-hearted, and the wise-hearted and the willing-hearted — so that he who runs may read — and the wayfaring man, though a fool, need not err therein; what need we more?"

"We are to pray with the understanding, as well as with the spirit, Julia; — we are to love God with all our mind and with all our strength, as well as with all our hearts; and therefore ——"

"Excuse me, Arthur, I make it a rule never to argue these questions with anybody, and least of all with you, or my poor brother. I am no match for you in argument; and though I have great confidence in my convictions, I am never able to express them, as you do yours, clearly and logically ——"

"I believe you are right, Cousin Julia. I question whether

we ever grow better or wiser, by disputation; as Uncle George says, the tree of knowledge has never, from the first, been the tree of life. It is not so much the learned, as the unlearned, who believe with all their hearts. We like to be wise above what is written, — and so we are shipwrecked, or entrapped, or overwhelmed and lost, before we see our danger."

"My good cousin! what shall I say to you? I would counsel you to go to your heavenly Father; but you have already done so — to throw yourself into the arms of your Saviour — but you do not see the way clearly, or you would have done so long before this, — I dare not advise you; but, perhaps, if you would talk freely with your dear, excellent mother, and with Uncle George, they might help you to find the way ——"

"The *way*, Julia! It is the teaching of our Saviour about the *way* that so troubles me. Straight is the way, and narrow is the path, and *few* there be that walk therein, — or something of the sort, he says, — I cannot remember the very words just now, but you will understand me."

"I do understand you, Arthur."

"On a certain occasion, too — and this, I acknowledge, Julia, and I never said as much to any other human being — this thrills me with horror, — he is asked if there be *many* that shall be saved. Instead of answering that question, so awful in its dread significance, and so proper, we should think, he tells us that *many are called*, and *few chosen*, — that the great highway to death is an over-crowded thoroughfare, while the way of life is but a narrow path, and few there be that walk therein; and if so — my heart stops beating, and my blood runs cold, when I think of what is foreshadowed thereby to countless generations of God's creatures; the burden is too heavy — I cannot bear it, nor can I throw it off."

"So much the better, I dare say," said Julia. "It may be that he would set us thinking, before it is too late, as where he seeks to alarm the rich ——"

"Who is sufficient for these things, dear children?" said Aunt Elizabeth, who had entered by a distant door, without being heard. "When we are troubled with a great mystery, and mysteries there must be, so long as we are not like God himself, let

us remember the warning of our Master—'What is that to thee? Follow thou me!'"

A long silence followed, which was broken at last by Arthur, exclaiming, as he drew a long breath, "What a day we have had, mother! how full of incident, and how endless! Upon my word, it seems like a month."

"Beware, my child! Habitual exaggeration is very like habitual extravagance. We find ourselves impoverished at last, like the poor prodigal, and may be obliged to feed on husks."

"Let us arise and go to our Father!" said Uncle George, pushing the Bible toward Aunt Elizabeth, who opened at Samuel, where it is related of the lad that he mistook the voice of God for the voice of Eli.

Arthur grew more and more thoughtful. Leaning his forehead upon his hand, the silence continued, till the voice of Uncle George was heard in prayer.

And then, as they all rose to interchange the kiss of peace, he added,—"How very beautiful, dear mother! The child goes to his Father and says, Speak, Lord! for thy servant heareth! But after a time, when he is better acquainted with himself, and with his own wants, the man says, Hear, Lord! for thy servant speaketh!"

Having satisfied themselves by a look, that Arthur was laying all these things to heart, and would be likely to ponder them, if left to himself, they withdrew; and he continued the reverie till he dropped asleep in his chair.

CHAPTER XIII.

THE next day and the following were spent in multiplied household arrangements, long since provided for among themselves, but found to have been overlooked in practice. Having sold the carriage and horses, they were now dependent upon the nearest railroad, a very obliging omnibus proprietor, always ready to go out of his way, and a distant livery stable. The marketing had to be done by piecemeal, and by proxy; and as neither Mrs. Maynard nor Julia had any experience whatever in this department of household economy, and the Major and Arthur were all at sea, whenever the subject was mentioned, it was finally thought best, after weighing every possible objection, to leave that business in the hands of a middle-aged woman, who had been secured as a sort of general superintendent, or housekeeper at large.

"It will take time, brother, for us to learn our trade; but as soon as the weather moderates, and the walking is good enough, Julia and I have made up our minds to enter upon the business of purveying for the house in downright earnest," said Aunt Elizabeth one morning, after they had got through with their consultation for the day.

The Major nodded and smiled — looking up from the paper he held, just long enough to show that he understood the question, and heartily approved of the course determined upon.

"If we are to carry out our plan of retrenchment," continued Mrs. Maynard, "all must concur and coöperate; and our chief attention for awhile must be given to what we have long been accustomed to regard as quite unworthy of our consideration."

"To be sure, Elizabeth. We must alternate, as others do, between beefsteaks and mutton chops, hot rolls, muffins, hashes, and buckwheat cakes, and be satisfied with lunches instead of

dinners, or tea and toast, instead of hot suppers; or crackers and cheese at a pinch."

"I am glad to see you take it so pleasantly, brother; for to tell you the truth, I have been more troubled about you, just recovering, as you are, from a wasting illness, and therefore needing to be cherished and pampered for awhile, than about ourselves. Julia, poor thing, hardly ever knows what we have had for dinner, and might be satisfied, day after day, with what you and Arthur would never think of touching — pastry and cakes, or olives and sardines."

"Or hard-boiled eggs and a cold mince-pie, — the greatest of all our luxuries at college," said Arthur.

"No, no, Arthur, excuse me," said Julia; "I have no objection to a bit of apple-pie, or plain cake, or a sandwich, or a very thin slice of bread and butter; and there is nothing I like more than what is called a picked-up dinner, with a dish of tea, — a dinner of odds and ends, I think they call it, Aunt Elizabeth; such as we used to have in the cottage at Margate, when we were all there together; but I never indulged in the luxuries of cold mince-pie, or hard-boiled eggs, whatever Arthur may think."

"'Pon honor, Julia?"

"'Pon honor, Arthur."

"Well, then, all I have to say is, that if you had been sent to college, and learned a trick or two at the oar, and got acquainted with sparring, or small-sword, or sporting, or cricketing, you would not be so ready to turn up your nose at hard-boiled eggs and cold mince-pie, nor even at a cold sausage; and I should be sure of seeing you always provided with a pocket full of shrimps or sandwiches, instead of the sugar-plums and fiddle-de-dees you girls are so fond of coquetting with, when you are left to yourselves."

"Two or three regular dinners a week, brother, — a plain roast or boiled, a good soup, something nice for a dessert, and occasionally, if you say so, something in the shape of a fish, — and I think we may manage to get along very pleasantly for awhile, — don't you think so?"

"Certainly, Elizabeth; and as we are steadfastly resolved to

understand for ourselves the cost of living in this country, and to look with our own eyes into the mysteries of housekeeping on a moderate scale, so that we may be prepared for the worst hereafter, happen what may, you may be sure of my hearty concurrence in whatever you undertake."

"And of mine, also, dear mother, if you are obliged to put us upon short allowance ——"

"Of roast beef and plum-pudding?" whispered Julia.

At this moment, a note was handed to Uncle George. It was from Mr. Fay, threatening to drop in "to-day or to-morrow in season for dinner, and to take a bed, perhaps, if they had one to spare."

"To-day or to-morrow!" exclaimed Aunt Elizabeth.

"Confound the fellow!" said Arthur to Julia, in a very low voice, but loud enough to be heard by his mother, who shook her head at him. "Two dinners will have to be provided for now, when we have but just blundered through with our first rehearsal for the season, of the new and laughable farce of — of — what shall we call it, Cousin Julia?"

"Of Household Economy."

"Very good, — of Household Economy; or How to make both ends meet."

"Or," added the Major, "A penny saved is as good as a penny earned, hey?"

"All for the best, dear brother. We can order the two dinners at once; or, if you men-folk will be patient and reasonable, I propose to order what may be needed for a handsome, quiet dinner to-day, and if the gentleman should not make his appearance, to put aside for to-morrow whatever may be best spared."

"Capital!" said Arthur; "or you might have somebody stationed at the Ferry, and have dinner at six, or half-past six, as no hour has been mentioned, and we are but young housekeepers, you know; and if Mr. Fay shouldn't appear by five at furthest, the whole dinner might be postponed till to-morrow, — why not? — or, upon my word, mother, I do think it was a very happy idea of yours, to begin with taking us all three into consultation! and I have another plan to suggest. What if you should go on with all your arrangements, upon the supposition that Mr. Fay will

certainly appear in season for to-day; set all your machinery at work, and when everything is ready to be served, all hot and smoking, if you are disappointed, you will have time enough to toss up something for the family, as others often do, I dare say, and whip aside for to-morrow whatever will bear to be warmed over, or served up cold; so that our friend Mr. Fay may have nothing to complain of."

Though all this was said with a pleasant and playful air, Julia detected a dash of bitterness in it, and her aunt, something she was not well satisfied with, for she grew serious, and turned the conversation into another channel.

"You have put aside several of the daily papers, I see, brother. If they relate in any way to the proceedings in court, pray oblige me by destroying them at once; or by locking them up, so that by no possibility they would be likely to fall in our way, or in the way of the servants, who are very curious and prying just now, let me tell you."

"I have already provided for this. No papers will be left here; and after to-morrow there will be nothing to fear. A nine day's wonder seldom outlives the first twenty-four hours in New York. Three papers only have mentioned the affair, — and in this, not even the name is mentioned."

"Don't, brother, pray don't! We are not strong enough, I assure you, whatever you may think of us, to bear another word on the subject; are we, Julia?"

Julia trembled from head to foot, and after choking a moment, answered, "No" — very faintly — "No."

"Don't be frightened, Elizabeth. What I had to say was rather of a nature to comfort and strengthen you and our dear Julia, much more than to trouble you. Perhaps you had better allow me to finish the little I wanted to say."

"As you please, brother," — growing pale, but speaking cheerfully.

"It was only this. In one of these three papers, which are all that I find containing so much as an allusion to the affair, no names are given; in another, the name is Penniman, and the facts are so represented as to leave an impression rather favorable than otherwise; and in the third, the initials are given, but

only two, instead of three, and the party is called the great London banker, G. P.; so that G. A. P. will escape, and the chances are, that Mr. George Peabody, or his friends, will have something to say to the proprietors of the paper, if the paragraph should not happen to be overlooked — as it well may — crowded into an unfrequented corner, and printed in very small type, as it is, among the *on dits* of the day, instead of appearing under the head of police intelligence, or proceedings in court; for all which I am very thankful; — not for myself, however, for I have made up my mind to bear patiently whatever may happen, till the day of my vindication, — but for your sake, Elizabeth, and for the sake of these dear children. All I ask of you is, to believe me when I say, with all seriousness, that so far as character is concerned, — the character of a Christian gentleman, — I have nothing to fear. Months may pass, before I have the opportunity I am waiting for; but sooner or later, it must and will come; and if I should be taken away by death, or disqualified by sickness, there will be found among my papers, — and I wish you all to remember what I now say, in the presence of God himself, — the most conclusive and satisfactory evidence, for my entire exculpation. You look troubled, my dear sister, and so do you, Julia; and you are wondering, perhaps, why, — if I am so perfectly sure of the result, and if I have such conclusive and satisfactory evidence in my possession, why there should be months of delay, and why, with my impatient pride of character and great sensitiveness, I should be willing to bide my time for a single day. But my reasons are manifold. Some of the papers are of a nature to involve another, as innocent as myself; others may need such corroboration as I cannot possibly obtain without correspondence, or without going abroad myself, or sending Arthur. If Charles were with us, I should know what to do, and the trying season of delay might be greatly abridged."

Julia and Arthur interchanged a look of intelligence, but nothing was said by either.

"I hope there may be no more of these paragraphs; and I rather think I have a friend at court, who has been busy from the first in my behalf. In no other way can I account for the fact, that although I have looked into all the evening and morn-

ing papers, and even into the police reports, where the name is printed Penniman, I have only found the case mentioned three times; and if I am right in my conjectures, that friend, whoever he may be, will take very good care that no subsequent apologies or explanations, on account of the two initials G. P. — the great London banker — may set people talking anew, or have a mischievous bearing upon G. A. P."

"How glad I am to see you take it so pleasantly, Uncle George," said Arthur; "but you will excuse me, — I hear the carriage I have ordered for Julia, and we have no time to lose. Come, Julia, get your shawl and bonnet, and your cloak and wrapper, — for you will find it rather cool, in the light open carriage I have ordered."

The Major looked puzzled; but as Aunt Elizabeth said nothing, he went back to the papers, which lay in a pile upon the sofa, and asked no questions.

"Children," said Aunt Elizabeth, just as they were going, "if you could stop five minutes on the way, I might give you a little order for the marketman, — it would save time and trouble."

"And the pennies, too, mother."

"And the pennies, too, my dear son; if we 'take care of the pennies, the pounds will take care of themselves,' you know."

"You will be back in season for dinner, children?" said Uncle George.

"Certainly! We wouldn't miss that conditional dinner for any consideration," said Julia.

"Nor the conditional Mr. Fay," added Arthur, in a tone Julia thought more than significant, — almost spiteful, in fact.

After a long, silent, and very uncomfortable ride, they found themselves near the gateway of a two-story cottage, one of a score built on both sides of a large court, and all precisely alike, with piazzas, and a little patch of green turf, with a flower-garden in front.

On being admitted to the number mentioned on the card, Julia and Arthur were shown into a snug little room, prettily furnished, having a shallow recess in the rear, hung with drapery like a boudoir, and rather crowded with pictures and odd-looking chairs, of all sizes and shapes; but before they had time to seat them-

selves, a large Newfoundland dog, that was lying in the shadow upon a door-mat, sprang toward Julia with a loud, joyful bark.

For a single moment, Julia lost her presence of mind, for the magnificent creature had both paws upon her shoulders, and was looking her in the eyes; but just as Arthur was reaching out his hand to take him by the collar, the door opened, and the voice of Mrs. Archibald was heard, crying, "Down, Carlo! down! Don't be frightened, Miss. Oh, how thankful I am! and how happy poor Edith will be!"

"Carlo! Carlo!" said Julia; "can it be possible! poor Carlo!" and she threw both arms round the neck of the dog, and sobbed like a child.

"Gamma, — I say, gamma!" lisped a little bright-eyed, sunny-haired thing, who had crept in behind Mrs. Archibald, without being observed, and was now holding on by her dress, — "Gamma! don't let 'em hurt Tarlo."

Whereupon the dog broke away from Julia, and, tumbling the poor child head over heels upon the floor, began slabbering his face and neck, till the grandmother was obliged to interfere.

"Have done, Carlo! don't be frightened, Charley!"

Carlo! Charley! What could all this mean? Carlo she knew. It was a dog that once belonged to her poor brother, and had so mysteriously disappeared about a month before Charles himself had left her, that she had somehow coupled the two events together, and so associated her brother and Carlo, that now, on seeing the poor dog, she almost expected the door to open, and her brother to walk in. But who was Charley? There he was, to be sure, flat upon his back, with his rich golden hair tumbling about like sunshine over the rich carpet, whenever he threw up his heels at Carlo, or tried to escape the tousling, of which he began to tire, by rolling over and over, and screaming for joy. That he was a live cherub, a downright romping, breathing cherub, with monstrous eyes, the ripest mouth you ever saw, — and a laugh, so merry and so musical, that you couldn't help joining in it, even while you were stopping your ears, Julia was ready to acknowledge; but who was he? and what was he? and why named Charley?

Mrs. Archibald saw the look of uneasiness, and well under-

stood the reason, perhaps; for while she was wiping her eyes with one hand, as if she would never stop, and smiling, as if she had never been so happy in all her life, and chirping to the baby, she had managed to get hold of Julia with the other, and carrying her hand to her lips, in a transport of joy, had well nigh set poor Arthur a-blubbering, just as he came forward to offer the long meditated apology.

"No, no, Mr. Maynard, you must excuse me," said Mrs. Archibald, "I want no apology, — I do not blame you, I never did," — almost sobbing; — "appearances were all against me; and how should you know that I was not one of the wretched creatures, who are always to be found about the doors and passage-ways of the grand hotels, or besieging the boarders at every turn?"

"You are very kind, Mrs. Archibald; but where a young fellow, with a decent education, and a live mother, behaves like a brute and a coxcomb ——"

"Not another word! not another word, for your life!" exclaimed Mrs. Archibald, clapping her hand over his mouth, and then bursting into tears, in her motherly kindness, and forgetfulness of all propriety. "Oh, Sir! oh, Mr. Maynard! forgive me, I beseech you! — but I was so carried away by your resemblance to the dear boy we have lost, that I forgot myself entirely. Poor Charles! the very tone of your voice, and your whole manner, and your very language, were so like his, that for a moment I mistook you for him — I do in my heart believe — though, just now, when I look at you again, as you stand there, I wonder at myself, that I should have seen the least resemblance."

"Others have thought as you do, Mrs. Archibald. When we were boys together, before he had outgrown me, and become altogether a man, or the magnificent creature he was when I saw him last, and not such a girl as I am, — with loose hair, a child's complexion, and the daintiest hands you ever saw, — look here! — hands that he would be ashamed of, — hands that any man, with any respect for himself, ought to be ashamed of ——"

"Why, Arthur! are you mad?" whispered Julia.

"Almost, I believe; but where was I?" — flinging back his hair with an imperial shake of the head, as he caught up the boy with one hand, and throwing himself into the attitude of John Kemble

as Rolla, the Peruvian chief, held him off at arm's length, and high up in the air, greatly to the astonishment of poor Carlo and everybody else. "I am not so weak as I sometimes appear, Mrs. Archibald; and though Charles and I were never mistaken for each other, after we had got our growth, I find people ready enough to acknowledge a resemblance, whenever I show off in this way, or talk somewhat wildly, or get surprised into some exhibition of bodily strength, just to satisfy these gainsayers that I am not altogether a woman."

There was a concentrated, scornful bitterness in what he said, which grieved Julia to the heart, and troubled Mrs. Archibald, who, seeing her distress, and anxious to change the subject, caught away the boy, just as Arthur had begun a new game of toss-up-and-catch, greatly to the delight of the dear little fellow, and turning toward Julia, she said to her, —

"He was named for your brother, my dear young lady."

"For my brother? — indeed!"

Fancying that poor Julia looked a little embarrassed, Arthur inquired the age of the child.

"Nearly three," was the answer.

"Haff-pas two, gamma!" said Charley, slipping down from his grandmother's lap, and catching Carlo by the ears, and trying to get on his back for a '*yide*.'

This did not much help the matter, and Julia began playing with the sunshiny locks of the boy, as if hoping to find the explanation there.

"You must be very strong, Mr. Maynard. I never saw anybody do that, with so much ease, except Mr. John Kemble himself," said Mrs. Archibald.

"You have seen his Rolla, then?"

"Seen it! yes, indeed! When I was about the age of your cousin here, I used to see him and Mrs. Siddons in all their leading parts; but after I married Mr. Archibald, I saw nothing more of the stage."

"And why not, pray?"

"Well, Sir, my husband was a godly man, a little bigoted perhaps in the opinion of others, who were not descended from the Covenanters, and were not Scotch Presbyterians. I did not

agree with him about the stage, nor about High Mass, and other ceremonies of the Catholic Church — for he classed them all together; but I yielded, nevertheless, and have not seen the inside of a theatre since my marriage, and have now either outlived, or outgrown the desire. We had a sharp argument before marriage about the putting away of childish things, and I must acknowledge that, instead of convincing him, he came so near convincing me, that — between ourselves — I was more than half ready to say, 'Almost thou persuadest me to be a Christian!'"

"A Christian!" said Arthur, "why, surely, he did not take such high ground as that!"

"He always took the highest ground; he maintained that no Christian could safely encourage any sort of theatrical representation, so long as theatres were what they are."

"So long as theatres are nothing but theatres, — neither conventicles nor churches, hey?"

"Precisely," said Mrs. Archibald, with a benevolent smile, just as the kindling of Arthur's eyes began to betray the inward working of his nature, and she saw signs of that uncontrollable vehemence, which had so frightened them a few minutes before, when he swung the child high up in the air, and seemed just on the point of breaking forth into some new extravagance."

"You must be very strong, as Mrs. Archibald says; are you not, Cousin Arthur?" added Julia, seeing him stoop and take the child by the arm, as if about to swing him into position once more.

"Don't, don't! you may dislocate the shoulder, my dear Mr. Maynard; I have known such a thing to happen upon the stage."

"Pray don't!" said Julia, — and the child screamed, and Carlo barked furiously.

"Poh, poh, Cousin Julia, — I shall not harm the boy — there is no sort of danger — it requires very little strength, and is rather a knack, as you see!" And notwithstanding all the remonstrances of the grandmother and Julia, and the dog and the baby, up went the little fellow once more, and Arthur struck the attitude you see in the engraving, very much after the style of a star at Bartlemy Fair, who has been greatly over-clapped. "There! you see how it is managed! The boy's knee is on my

shoulder, so that I have only to keep him steady, instead of holding him up, as Kemble did, at arm's length, and by an effort of prodigious bodily power."

"Very true, — I see how it is done," said Mrs. Archibald, "and I am only the more astonished, when I remember that Mr. Kemble used to catch up the child from the stage, with a single effort, while others would heave and sway, and after all, not accomplish the feat."

Afraid that other demonstrations, yet more boyish perhaps, might follow, if Arthur and the baby and the dog were left together, Julia looked at Mrs. Archibald, who, catching up Charley, and asking if Miss Julia wouldn't like to see poor Edith, moved toward the door, followed by the dog.

"Certainly, — I have come for the very purpose: will you wait for me, Cousin Arthur, or call for me in half an hour at furthest, — or say three quarters?"

"I'll wait here if you will leave the baby with me — and Carlo — here, Carlo, here!"

But Carlo was in no humor to be left behind, now that he saw the door opened, and the passage-way up-stairs all free; and off he sprang toward the door.

Mrs. Archibald shook her head, with a smile for Julia, which Arthur did not quite understand; so he drew a chair to the table, and opened a volume of Shakspeare he found lying there; and Carlo tumbled up-stairs with a loud, joyful cry, which died away at last, in a low, musical whimper.

"Excuse me, for a moment, my dear young lady," said Mrs. Archibald. "We have been expecting you every day, since we received your note, and I have no doubt we shall find the poor thing fully prepared for the interview; but still, perhaps, it would be safer for me to see her first."

"Certainly — by all means; but, my dear Mrs. Archibald, perhaps you had better leave the baby with me, while you are making the arrangements above. I am afraid the noise below may have disturbed her already."

"Disturbed her! disturb our little Edith! no, indeed! There's nothing she seems to enjoy so much, now that she is able to sit up, as the frolics of Carlo and the baby; — they are always

romping together, and rolling about over the floor, all three of them, like playfellows just let out of school, in a long summer afternoon."

"All three of them! I thought poor little Edith, as you call her, was confined to her bed."

"Oh, no! She is not very strong, to be sure; but she sits up most of the day, sleeps well now, and has a good appetite; and, to tell you the truth, has been growing better and better, and happier and happier, ever since the letters I left with you were received."

Mrs. Archibald tapped — a sweet, pleasant voice answered from within — the baby shouted — and as the knob of the door turned, Carlo pushed through with a yelp of ungovernable joy, and sprang toward a large easy-chair, and rested both paws upon the arms, and set up the most piteous wail ever uttered by a reasonable dog in a sick-chamber. Though Julia was not superstitious, her blood ran cold, when she caught her mother's eye.

"Poor Carlo! poor Carlo!" said the same sweet, ringing, childish voice, — "how glad I am to see you once more! and my little neffy too! how d'ye do, baby, how d'ye do! kiss little aunty. You have been having a nice time below, hey? — there, there, that'll do! down Carlo, down! be quiet, will you! — both of you — I don't want to be slabbered all over. Ah, my dear mother! I have been growing a little anxious, and impatient, and peevish, I'm afraid, while you have all been having such a good time there below; but you'll forgive me, I know you will."

"Yes, my love."

"But oh, mother, if you knew how I long to see that dear Julia we have heard so much of!"

"Hush — hush, my love!" whispered Mrs. Archibald, with a glance at the door.

"I understand you, mother. She is there! — I know it! — I feel it!"

"Shall I come in?"

"Oh, yes, yes! I am dying to see you!"

Julia entered on tiptoe, stepping softly, as all women do in a sick-chamber, if women they are; but she stopped suddenly on

seeing the apparition of a child — a mere child — not over fifteen, at the most, judging by her looks, with eager eyes, a mouth half opened, as if she had been chirping to herself, and a countenance of wonderful beauty, stowed away in the large easy-chair, and half buried in shawls, with her feet cuddled up under her clothes, and a prodigious quantity of golden hair floating away over the pillow behind, like sunshine spilled, and rippling toward her lap.

There was no look of wasting, nor of sorrow, — no unpleasant stillness nor seriousness; and, for a moment, Julia hesitated, and looked about with an air of embarrassment.

"Oh, you are disappointed, I see! But I am not — I should have known *you* among ten thousand, though not so much from what poor Charles used to say — for, do you know? I don't believe in brothers — as from the description dear mother gave me."

Julia began to breathe more freely.

"And you, *you* are that poor little Edith, I have been picturing to myself," said she, going a little nearer.

"I am, indeed, I assure you," — kicking her little feet free, and stretching out both hands toward Julia, — "upon my word I am! just that poor little Edith, of whom you have heard so much, I dare say, from that good mother of mine, — but I don't believe in mothers any more than I do in brothers, — no, indeed, not I! — when they get a-going about their children, that is; and so, you may as well make up your mind to look no further for poor little Edith."

Julia was no longer in doubt. There was no withstanding the witchery of this appeal — the pleasant, cheerful voice — the playfulness of look — the outstretched, eager, trembling hands.

Mrs. Archibald pushed up a chair directly in front of Edith, and begging Julia to be seated, and taking the baby, and chirping to Carlo, left the room.

Not a word was spoken for two or three minutes, — their hearts were too full, — and the eyes of both were overcharged; and when Edith spoke at last, it was only to say, "And you are that beloved Julia, — that dear, faithful sister, we have heard so much of!"

"But you don't believe in brothers, you know," murmured Julia, smiling through her tears, and pressing Edith's dear little hands with trembling emotion.

"Not always."

"And it is to you, then, my dear Miss Archibald ——"

"No, no! — not Miss Archibald — *Edith*, if you please; and if you will permit me, otherwise I cannot talk freely with you, I will call you Julia, — when we are by ourselves, I mean."

"With all my heart!"

"And now, if you please, just finish what you had to say to Miss Archibald."

"I was about saying that it is to you, Edith — *dear* Edith — judging by my poor brother's letter, that we are indebted for that which is more than life to us — the hope that he will yet become what we have so long prayed for?"

"With the blessing of our heavenly Father, yes; but your dear brother is a very strange man, — he frightens me sometimes, when I believe in my heart he means to be kind and gentle; and then too, he is so haughty, and imperious, and *unforgiving*."

"Not unforgiving; oh no!"

"Oh yes! — I know him better than you do, Julia."

"Better than I do, Edith!"

"Yes; for whatever you may know of his temper, I know something more of it, which you do not. He has often said so. Mother has often heard him say that you and I are the only two human beings that ever understood him, and that some portions of his character, and not the best by any means, I am better acquainted with than you are. You smile — you shake your head; and now that I am no longer afraid of you, I can tell you what you are thinking of."

"Afraid of me!"

"To be sure I was, and have been, ever since our first acquaintance, when he threatened to throw me into the water, if I wouldn't give him a kiss."

"A kiss!"

"Oh, it was all a mistake. He thought I was a child, — only a little child — for Carlo and I had just got acquainted, and we were tumbling about in the long grass, all by ourselves; and

sister Effie and he were watching us, and talking all sorts of nonsense about me, as I heard her say, after it was all over. But — he found his match, I tell you ! and he got, oh, such a slap in the face ! — but it did him good though, for he never asked me to kiss him after that, nor ever kissed me, until — until " — growing very red, and giggling till her heart ran over at her eyes, — " Oh, you needn't turn away your face ! I know what you are thinking of, as I told you before, — you cannot make up your mind about me, whether I am a woman or a child, — nor could your poor brother; sometimes I believe he thought me beside myself, as you do, — I see it in your eyes — an elf, or a changeling, or a downright simpleton ; there, you needn't deny it ! "

Julia could not bear to contradict her, and yet, how could she bear to acknowledge the truth? Never in all her life had she been so puzzled.

" After we had got acquainted, and he had learned to behave himself, he took such a fancy to me, that he was forever talking about his wonderful sister, and telling how she behaved, and how amiable she was, and how patient, and how much more she knew than other people of her age, and how much he wanted me to be like her, and so — and so — I began to be afraid of you, and then to dislike you, and thought you must be a very tiresome sort of a thing; so proper, and so conscientious, and so mean-spirited."

Julia let go the hand she was holding, and her countenance flushed.

" Oh, don't be alarmed. This too was all a mistake, as I came to know after we had been acquainted two or three years, and I had learned the difference between the 'poor in spirit' and the mean-spirited. You had always been too patient, according to his notion, too humble by half, too meek, and much too ready to forgive."

" You are not afraid of me now, hey ? "

" Not afraid of you ! Yes, but I am though, more than ever ! " catching her hand to her lips.

" But, Edith," — coloring slightly, and then repeating the name *Edith*.

" Well, how do you like it ? "

"Very much, I assure you."

"I do not ask you, Julia, *dear* Julia, how you like me; it is a little too soon, perhaps; but I dare say I shall, before we get through; for you must remember that although you have been acquainted with me only about half an hour, I have been acquainted with you — oh, ever so long!"

"But nevertheless, I think you must be under a strange delusion about my poor brother, and perhaps about me. He was never thought unforgiving, nor ungenerous."

"Ungenerous! no, indeed! not he! the most headlong, uncalculating, generous creature that ever breathed; but unforgiving, — I insist upon it, — *unforgiving!*"

"No, no, Edith, you wrong my poor brother; I know of many cases where he had been cruelly betrayed and wronged, and yet, upon the first word or look of repentance, he would not only forgive, but so entirely forget the offence, that he would have to be reminded of it."

"Did you ever know him to forgive anybody, till he had him in his power?"

"I do not remember," — musing, — "perhaps not."

"And is that a forgiving temper, Julia? Must we have our adversary under our feet, before we forgive? Are we not told that if our brother offend us seventy times seven in a day, we are to forgive him?"

"Provided he comes to us, and says 'I repent.'"

"Well, well, may be so; but if he were not unforgiving, Julia, would he bear the grudge, till he had his enemy in his power? Would you?"

"No, indeed; but my brother and I were always unlike; though he remembered wrongs, and up to a certain point would avenge them, yet he was not vindictive, nor did he ever bear a grudge."

"You were never more mistaken in your life; and I am glad now that I used the word; for do you know, dear Julia," lowering her voice, and leaning half out of the chair, "that one of my chief reasons for wishing to see you so soon after the letters reached me, was to get your help, in overcoming the deadliest grudge your brother ever entertained in his life."

"You must be mistaken, Edith."

"No; for the very last time we ever met, and parted, never to meet again perhaps, he breathed so heavily when dear mother happened to mention the name of a certain person, the last you would ever be likely to think of, and there was something so terrible in his look, that we were appalled. He did not use threatening language, but I saw and knew, that he would never stop till he had that enemy in his power, though he should have to hunt him to the ends of the earth."

"Frightful! But I must continue to believe that you are mistaken, if not altogether, at least in a measure. But — stop! — I see by your eyes that you have something more to communicate; what is it?"

Edith seemed to be struggling and choking for utterance.

"Are you at liberty to tell me who that person was?"

"I shall take the liberty, come what may. You would have been told months ago, had not your brother disappeared so suddenly; but, since the letters reached me, I have been thinking it all over anew, and I am satisfied that my duty is clear. That person was your Uncle George."

"Merciful Heaven!" whispered Julia, all aghast with horror.

"Mother! mother!" screamed poor Edith, as Julia's countenance changed; and then, after a short struggle, she pitched forward upon the nearest pillows, with a broken-hearted wail of astonishment, and grief and terror.

The scream and the wail were heard below, and Arthur came rushing up-stairs, three steps at a time, followed by Mrs. Archibald and Carlo and the baby; the last a long way behind, on his hands and knees.

As Arthur entered the room, and saw poor Julia leaning forward on the bed, silent and motionless, and a little creature in the shape of a child, with the energy of a woman, chafing her hands, trying to lift her up, and looking toward the door, and calling "Mother! mother!" he lost all command of himself, and was about to ask what business that changeling had there? and why Edith did not make her appearance? but just then, Julia stirred, gasped for breath, shuddered, and put forth her hands,

like one bewildered and lost in a sudden darkness, and trying to feel her way out.

"You are Cousin Arthur, I suppose, are you not?" asked Edith.

Arthur bowed, astonished at the calm beauty of the countenance, and greatly relieved as he saw Mrs. Archibald push by him, with a tumbler in her hand, kneel by the side of the dear sufferer, and put one arm round her, while she held the water to her lips, and then sprinkle her face with a few drops.

"No, no, Edith! You must not try to lift her," said her mother, "you are too weak; but Mr. Maynard, if you please, you may help me to lay her on the sofa. Ah! she is coming to, — hush!"

"And why not give her my chair?" said Edith, gathering up an armful of drapery, and springing to the floor in her slippered feet, with the lightness of a shadow; "here! here, mother, let her sit here."

"No, my love, that would never do; she must be carried to the sofa, and left there, till she comes to herself."

Obeying a sign from Mrs. Archibald, Arthur lifted her up, and refusing all assistance, carried her without help to the sofa, and left her lying there, pale as death, and speechless, but breathing faintly at long intervals, and moaning and sobbing, as if in her sleep.

"There! there!" whispered Edith, "you had better go now, Cousin Arthur," touching him on the shoulder as she spoke. "When you are wanted, I'll rap for you."

Had the sunshine that plays over a cottage-floor, and then over the ceiling, and then over the damp rose-bushes at the window, dazzling the eyes, and tickling the lips, and astonishing the little folks with every change, whenever a mischievous boy, with a bit of broken looking-glass, begins to find out for the first time what it is good for, — had a good old-fashioned will-o'-the-wisp flashed into his very face and eyes, without a word of notice, and called him "Cousin Arthur," he could not have been much more startled.

As it was, however, he bowed and withdrew, wondering what the apparition would say next.

All being hushed and quiet, Julia soon recovered, and after looking about and recalling what had happened, would have gone off in another fainting fit, and still another, but for the good common sense of poor Edith, who happened to recollect her mother's hartshorn bottle, just in time.

Julia looked at her watch, and tried to rise.

"No, no, — you must not think of going yet," said Mrs. Archibald, — "you are altogether too weak; it would be as much as your life is worth, dear child!"

"But we have company to dinner, and Arthur and I have promised to be there, and we must not fail; they would be so disappointed, and so troubled, perhaps; for we never break a promise, if it can be helped."

"But my dear young lady, it cannot be helped. You must not go till you are safe; but if you will permit me, I can easily send over and let them know; or perhaps Mr. Maynard might be willing to ride over, and leave you here till to-morrow?"

"No, no, thank you; that would never do. They would be frightened to death; — but now, that I recollect myself, I find that I have two or three questions, dear Edith, which I must beg of you to answer before I go, or I shall never sleep again."

"What are they? I will answer anything and everything, dear Julia, that concerns either myself or your brother."

Mrs. Archibald thought she heard the baby just then; and Julia and Edith were left alone together once more, — sitting face to face, and holding each other's hands, and talking as if they were in the house of death, and felt the presence of the departed, or had the gift of "discerning spirits."

"I must be very brief, Edith; but you will forgive me, I know."

Edith lifted the pale hand to her lips, and her eyes filled.

"You are not the child I thought you, dear Edith. You are indeed a woman."

"I never was a child, Julia; and I am afraid I never shall be a woman. But compose yourself, and waste no more words, in preparation, I pray you."

"Thank you, dear Edith. My first question shall be this: —

Do you know what has embittered my poor brother so, against Uncle George?"

"No, Julia, I cannot say that I know; but I have heard enough, and seen enough, to believe that your Uncle George never lost sight of him for two or three years; that he watched him too narrowly; that the persons employed — the 'spies,' your brother called them — betrayed their trust, and lied, he says, to both parties, the uncle and nephew. I have no doubt, moreover, that your brother believes I should have married him, but for your Uncle George."

"And why did you not marry him, dear Edith?"

"Why did I not marry him? Because I loved him."

"And you did really love my poor brother?"

"Love him, Julia! There has been, I believe, no time since the first year of our strange wayward acquaintance, when I would not have died for him, if that would have helped the matter."

"And yet you refused to marry him?"

"Well, I did; though I do not understand how you should know it, for I never mentioned it in my life, — not even to my dear mother."

"I know it from Charles himself. In the letter I have here, — which I will now leave with you — he has told me many things which I never dreamed of; and some, perhaps, which you ought to know, and may not be altogether prepared for. But when did this happen?"

"The very night he saw you last. He had been with us all the afternoon, — he had just found Carlo, — and we were all so happy; and I know not how it happened, — for I do not believe he had ever thought of marriage, in a serious way, — all at once, while we were talking about our first acquaintance, and about the death of poor Effie, — the mother of little Charley, — and about some things in your brother's life, which had come to my knowledge, and grieved me so that I could neither eat nor sleep, — and for a long while saw visions, and had a dreadful ringing in my ears, — he started up, and taking both my hands into his, and looking at poor mother, who had just happened to mention your Uncle George, made a sign for her to leave us together; and then — having shut the door after her — he came up to

me, looking like a madman, his dark eyes flashing fire, and his mouth working, as you have seen it, I dare say, with deadly determination; he said, almost in the very words I am now repeating, — I remember them well, they were burned in upon my heart as with a hot iron, and the dreadful sound is in my ears now, — 'Edith! I have made up my mind to leave this country, and, I hope, forever. But you I cannot leave. My arrangements are all made; — I have the means of living comfortably where I am going. What say you, Edith, dear? Everything depends upon your answer. Life and death, — here and hereafter, it may be! What say you, at a word! I have no time to waste, — will you go with me?'

"I know not what I did, — for I was choking. I could not have answered yes or no, if my life had depended upon it; but he flung away from me, suddenly, as if I had spoken, and began pacing the floor. At last, after a short struggle, I managed to shake my head. He stopped short, and commanded me, with that imperious, unforgiving air I complain of, to '*speak out!*'"

"Poor child," murmured Julia.

"'If thou canst nod, speak too!' said he; and I saw at once that he was growing wild; and instantly, as by a revelation from the other world, I remembered all that I had been told by your Uncle George, — and my path was clear before me.

"'Dear Charles,' I said, 'the question takes me by surprise. You have never mentioned marriage to me before, — and I have never thought of marriage, — and I have heard you say, that no woman ought ever to marry under twenty, if she hopes to be good for anything after marriage.'

"'Nonsense, Edith! You are afraid to be plain with me,' said he.

"'That's a fact!' said I. And, would you believe it, the man almost laughed in my face?

"'Well, what say you?' said he; growing more and more gloomy.

"'In two years and a little more,' said I, — hoping to bring him back to a more pleasant humor, — 'when I shall be of the age bargained for.'

"'Nonsense, Edith! I am not playing with you. Will you

marry me, or will you not? Will you share my fortunes, for better and worse, here and hereafter, — or will you not?'

"'*Here and hereafter!*' said I; and my blood thrilled as I remembered the warning of the Apostle, about being yoked with unbelievers, or unequally yoked; and God strengthened me, and I answered something in this way, — 'How can I leave my poor mother, dear Charles?' — for I did not like to hurt his feelings.

"He smiled bitterly, — and pressing his lips to my forehead, while a tear dropped into my face, he said, 'I understand you, Edith. And yet, on my soul, I think you love me, — and I know you have loved me.'

"'Yes, Charles, I have indeed loved you; and I am afraid I love you now, much more than is likely to be for my peace of mind hereafter; unless, to be sure,' — and I hesitated.

"'Out with it!' said he; and a deathlike paleness overspread his countenance, and he seemed just ready to drop; he staggered, and as I caught him, he drew me up to his heart with all his strength, — and then and there I received the first, and the last kiss upon my lips, that your brother ever gave me. 'Out with it, Edith! I know what is coming!' said he; 'and I know well to whom you and I are indebted for your change of disposition toward the man you loved so much but a twelvemonth ago, — ten thousand curses on the meddlesome fool! — but speak! speak out, like yourself, dear, and let me know the worst, and the fewer words the better.' I looked up into his face, and the tears fell into mine like a summer shower, and I was terribly frightened and shattered; but I prayed for strength, and the strength came, and I slipped through his arms upon the floor, and then told him, — but no matter what I told him, — the words I no longer remember, but I well remember their meaning. Upon my knees, and in the presence of God's holy angels, I declared to your noble, generous, high-hearted brother, that much as I loved him, I would sooner die, sooner give him up, and forever, than risk the everlasting welfare of both, till he had become a changed man. He sneered, and paced the room, and flung his arms wildly into the air, and stamped with passion; but after awhile he grew calmer, and asked me what I meant by a changed man? I hesitated, — for I did not like to discourage

him; and it was not enough, in my judgment, that he should give up certain evil habits, — we needed something more.

"'Edith,' said he, at last, — kneeling by my side, and throwing one arm round my waist, — oh, how well I remember that convulsive pressure! — 'Edith, dear, I believe I understand you; but I want to be very sure. Will you go with me, and share my fate, here and hereafter, if I will promise you, on the faith of a man who never broke his plighted word, to give up gambling, and drinking, and every other evil habit, which you suppose me to have been guilty of?'

"'At the end of a twelvemonth, dear Charles, I will,' said I, 'if ——,' but before I could finish what I had to say, he sprang to his feet, and lifting me up, and then stooping so as to look me straight in the eyes, he said in a tone I shall never forget, — oh, Julia! it was the wail of a broken-hearted man, just ready to give up the ghost, — I shall never forget it, though I should live a thousand years, — '*Now or never!*' said he; 'I cannot wait a twelvemonth, — I will not wait another day, — *now or never!*'

"'*Never!*' said I, — for God strengthened me, Julia, — '*never!*' and he was gone! and I never saw him afterward!"

A long silence followed, interrupted by tears and sobs. Julia was entirely overcome; — the child, the changeling, the little creature who had so astonished her at first, by her waywardness and playfulness, had now astonished her a thousand times more, by these revelations of womanly character, and high principle; and she took her to her heart, and kissing her again and again, and calling her sister, and putting her brother's letter into her hand with a most encouraging smile, they dropped upon their knees together, side by side, and wept and prayed together, till notice came from below that the carriage was waiting, and they had not another moment to lose.

CHAPTER XIV.

"How could you behave so strangely, Cousin Arthur?" said Julia, on their way home, after they had crossed the ferry. There had been a long, and rather embarrassing silence, which neither desired to be accountable for, if it could be helped, though neither was willing to speak first; and the longer it continued, the more uncomfortable it grew for both. "What must that dear, good, motherly Mrs. Archibald think of you?"

"To tell you the truth, Julia, I don't much care what Mrs. Archibald may think of me; but I owe it to myself, and I owe it to you, to acknowledge that I am heartily ashamed of my behavior. These feats of the gymnasium and the riding-school, these college pranks, I thought I had outgrown, but somehow or other, when that good Mrs. Archibald burst out so suddenly, in her passionate admiration of your brother's great bodily strength, and magnificent bearing, with her eyes fixed upon me all the time, as if measuring me from head to foot, and comparing me inch by inch, for your edification, Julia ——"

"Preposterous!"

"I grew nervous and fidgety, and so I thought I would astonish you both, — as I did, I think, did I not?"

"Indeed you did, Arthur; but you will excuse me if I say that you grieved me still more than you astonished me. It was so unlike you, Arthur, and so boyish."

"Boyish, Julia! — it was childish, absolutely childish."

Another long pause, which Arthur was the first to break.

"That dog of your brother's, I have taken a great liking to, Julia; I wonder if we couldn't coax him over to the cottage? He must be sadly in the way where he is, though Mrs. Archibald thinks him a great protection to the house, and poor Edith, she says, would never think of parting with him."

"A gift from brother Charles, I dare say; and of course, however troublesome he might be, they would not be very likely to spare him."

"No such thing, Julia. It was no gift from your brother; Mrs. Archibald has given me the whole history of that dog, — what a magnificent creature he is, to be sure! — but he might as well have been a gift; for the truth of the matter is, that, although Mrs. Archibald would like to be rid of him on some accounts, if he could go into our family, yet she would never part with him to a stranger. You must make her tell you the story as she told it to me, while you were up stairs with Edith; and Carlo and the baby and I were having it all our own way on the carpet below. It seems that Charles got acquainted with him when he was a puppy — I might say when both were puppies — for he was no better than other people at the time; the baby — this very baby — had pitched over a bank into the river, head first, while the nurse happened to be listening to the nonsense of your brother, who was frolicking with Effie and Edith. On hearing a scream, he rushed to the river just in time to see this great, overgrown puppy swimming ashore with the baby in his mouth, face downward; in he jumped, without stopping to throw off his coat, and between the two, after a short struggle, the baby was got ashore safely, more frightened than hurt. Charles insisted on buying the dog and training him, for he was only a great, lubberly, good-natured creature at the time, pawing the dresses of all he took a fancy to — showering the carpets when he shook himself — and tumbling the children head over heels into the long grass, and then washing their faces. He kept the dog, till he came here; but soon after, he lost him, as you know, and then, after a long search, gave him up entirely, supposing he had been stolen, or killed for his beautiful shaggy coat, which is in great demand for gentlemen's collars, they say; but on the very night, when Charles appeared to you so suddenly in the midst of that terrible snow-storm, at the St. Nicholas, — or rather, about three in the morning, Mrs. Archibald was wakened from what she called a 'drowse,' by a loud scratching and whimpering at the outside door. While she was wondering what it could mean, and trying to recollect herself, so that in case of need, she might rouse her

next neighbor, there was a loud bark — and then another — and Edith started up, and called Carlo! Her mother, who had been watching by her side, thought she was dreaming, but she was now fully awake, and persisted in saying, 'That's Carlo's voice! oh, pray go down and let them in!' Her mother went down, and after calling the dog, and getting the well-known joyful cry of recognition, she opened the door cautiously, without unfastening the little chain, and the poor dog thrust in his head as far as it would go, and set up such a piteous wail, that she was filled with a superstitious terror; and it was not without a struggle, that she could bring herself to open the door — after calling Charles! Charles! two or three times in a low voice; but no answer followed, nothing but the impatient whimper of the dog, and the sad, melancholy whistling of the wind. Her heart died away within her, — and when, at last, she opened the door, and the dog rushed in — and nobody followed, — and she heard along the passage-way above, the pattering of naked feet hurrying back to Edith's chamber, she knew that her poor child meant something very mournful and serious, when she begged her mother to run down and let *them* in; and must be, if possible, more piteously disappointed than her mother; but she asked no questions, and contented herself with saying, in a cheerful voice, that Carlo was below in comfortable quarters, and looking none the worse for what he might have gone through with. From that hour, Carlo was never out of the way, — he was not only a playfellow and pony for the baby — but a companion for Edith and her mother, as quiet and well-behaved, as one could wish, though unwieldy, and sometimes unmanageable, in his outbreaking, turbulent joy. He was, moreover, a capital watch-dog, and allowed no interlopers, mastiff or hound, 'nor curs of low degree.'"

"Thank you, Arthur," said Julia, when he had finished. "You have made me love the noble creature a hundred times more than ever, — and, therefore, I should not have the heart to rob Edith of him, — by the by, though — what say you of Edith? How do you like her?"

"Not knowing, can't say. If she isn't underwitted — she is demented — or I really do not know what to think of her."

"Nor do I much wonder; but when I say to you, as I do with

all seriousness, that instead of being underwitted, or demented — shé is inspired; — that, instead of being what I first believed her to be, a spoilt, wayward child, she is a high-principled woman, well educated, largely gifted, simple and unaffected as truth itself, and, withal, a religious woman — almost without knowing it herself — I hope you will be inclined to a favorable opinion of her, and of my brother's judgment, to say nothing of his taste. Did you ever see a finer face — or such beautiful eyes; large, playful, and clear as a kitten's?"

"Never."

"And then, too, such heaps of golden hair!"

"Golden, Julia — golden is taffy-colored, — but hers only just such as you find in Titian's Flora, and the Danaë — Titianesque, as if the sunshine itself were enmeshed, and intertangled with the shadow."

"Or 'brown in the shadow and gold in the sun,' as Whittier so beautifully says."

"Ah! we shall soon be there!" cried Arthur, waking up from a long reverie, "though not in time, perhaps, unless the dinner has been postponed."

"But, Arthur, you have borne what I said so patiently, there is one thing more I should like to say. Having promised your mother to be a sister, when I see you running wild, I cannot bear to give you up, without another word of caution, before we separate."

"Whether of caution or reproof, reproach or admonition, sister Julia, it will be most welcome, I assure you. It will, at least, prove that you feel some interest in me; and if you choose to take the position at once, be it so, — henceforth, you are to be sister Julia, instead of Cousin Julia, — what say you?"

"Well, — I see no objection, I confess — when we are alone together, I mean. Before third persons, it might be troublesome or embarrassing."

"I understand you, sister Julia, — proceed with what you had on your mind, if you please."

"I will. Were you serious, Arthur, in what you said to Mrs. Archibald about the theatre?"

"Not altogether, perhaps, — but there was no time for expla-

nation or qualification; and, moreover, I was provoked, — and all the more, when I got below and found a volume of Shakspeare, with the gilding all worn off, lying open on the work-table, with a pair of spectacles for a mark, which I take it for granted belonged to Mrs. Archibald ——"

"You are a close observer — and I dare say you are right, Arthur; and what then?"

"What then! Why, if people read Shakspeare — and quote Shakspeare in the pulpit — and then refuse to see Shakspeare played, — I cannot well understand how they are to reconcile their inconsistency."

Julia shook her head, and smiled.

"Go on, brother," said she.

"To talk as they do about plays, and the immorality of the stage, and then to borrow so much from the wondrous poetry of the stage ——;" and here he stopped short.

"Go on! go on!"

"If there had been time, while she was talking about her bigoted husband, I should have called her attention to the religious character of some people, who have written plays for the stage, — that of Dr. Johnson, — or Dr. Young, with his three tragedies, — or Addison, — or Hannah More."

"And what then?"

"To be sure, Julia, the question is not so much as to the morality of the plays themselves, perhaps," — faltering and growing a little nervous, with a twitching about the mouth, as he encountered Julia's calm steady eyes, fixed upon him with a sorrowful expression, — "as to the morality of the stage, or theatre."

Julia smiled.

"But what business have we with the characters or doings of actors or actresses, off the stage?"

"Go on, brother."

"Sometimes, to be sure," — hesitating, and growing a little uneasy, — "it may rather deaden the effect of a virtuous character, or speech, to hear it from the mouth of a profligate man, or a worthless woman, — as if Portia were something notorious off the stage, — but why bother ourselves about their doings else-

where? We go to the theatre to be amused, or bettered, — and what business can it be of ours, how the people we see there behave at home? We buy our marketing, and you your silks and laces, where you are best pleased, without inquiring into the household character of the parties. If your beef is good, or the gloves Alexandre's — you see I haven't wholly forgotten our first interview with Miss Wentworth — you do not inquire if the husband is on good terms with his wife, nor how he treats his children."

Julia never took off her eyes from the glowing countenance before her; but she answered nothing.

"Perhaps you will say that, if we knew a market-man to be a bad husband, or a bad father, or if we had good reason to believe that a woman who sold laces, and gloves, and fashionable dresses, was no better than she should be, it would be our duty to go elsewhere?"

Still not a word from Julia.

"Why don't you answer me, *sister*?"

"I see no occasion for answering you; you have answered yourself, as I knew you would, if you were left, uncontradicted, to worm your way out of the labyrinth. You have said all that can be said, I believe, — all that need be said, I am sure."

This was really too provoking; and Arthur began to fidget in his seat more nervously than ever; and then, all at once, he broke out with —

"You are the strangest woman I ever met with, Julia Parry!"

"Thank you, Arthur Maynard!"

"But don't be too sure that I have answered myself, or that I have said all I can say, on the other side of the question."

"Not for the world, Arthur. I know you too well for that."

"Zounds! if I ever knew how to take you! But one word more I *will* say. When we leave a bad husband, who supplies our table with the best of beef, or a bad father, or worse mother, who furnishes the best of laces and gloves, at less than cost, perhaps, — we may be able to go elsewhere. But there is no such elsewhere in theatres. They are all so much alike, that if we give up one, for the reason assigned, we must give up all."

Here Julia could bear it no longer. She laughed outright, — and for the first time in six months perhaps, heartily, and with the joyous ringing laugh of other days.

Arthur felt the answering vibration, — but was piqued, and nettled, and would not acknowledge it.

"You misunderstand me, Julia," said he. "The cases are not strictly parallel, and you did not allow me to finish. Suppose you could not go elsewhere, when you were in want of a silk dress, or gloves, or a dinner, — in other words, that all the dealers were alike, as much as all theatres are alike, — what would you do then? Would you go without altogether? or would you go further, and fare worse?"

"No, Arthur; but supposing such a case, — which is too extravagant for supposition, I think, and not worth considering, therefore, — I should try to make the best of it; in other words, I should get what I must have, and could not possibly do without, just where I happened to find it most convenient, and the characters of the shopmen, or shopwomen, were least objectionable; and if, therefore, — I see you are a little angry with me, or with yourself; which is it?"

"With both, Julia."

"And if, therefore, theatrical representations upon the stage are something you must have, like provisions, or something you cannot possibly do without, like laces, and gloves, and 'women's wear,' — why then, I suppose you are at liberty to make the best of it, or even go further, and fare worse."

"Enough! I am satisfied."

"There's my hand, Arthur; are we friends?"

"Friends, Julia! can we ever be otherwise?"

"I can't say, Arthur. Sometimes I think it may be otherwise, and then I tremble for you."

"For me, Julia?"

"And for myself. But here we are; and now, one word more. Be on your guard, I pray you, if that Mr. Fay is here. Let us watch him narrowly; and after he is gone, we will compare notes with Uncle George and your mother."

As the carriage drew up, they saw several faces at the window, and a pocket handkerchief waving at the end of the piazza;

and as they alighted, they were welcomed by the Major, who told them that Mr. Fay had not disappointed them; that no unreasonable delay had occurred; that their order to the market-man, flung out of the carriage window as they rode by, with only a word of warning from Arthur not to be *slow*, had been duly honored; and that, in a word, they were just in time, and would now have an opportunity of seeing their friend, Mr. Fay, and of studying him at their leisure.

Arthur and Julia interchanged a look of surprise, at the strange coincidence of language and purpose, without intercommunication, between the Major and themselves. One would have thought he had overheard the last remark of Julia, about watching and studying their guest, and then comparing notes.

The dinner, a well contrived, unostentatious affair, went off charmingly. Mr. Fay, though serious, and far from being facetious or communicative, as they had been led to hope, from what they had been told of him, was evidently in good-humor, and willing to be pleased. It seemed to be the great object of the Major to bring him out, and show him off; and Julia caught her Aunt Elizabeth and her Uncle George telegraphing each other, at times, the whole length of the table, as if they had a common purpose in view, and were playing into each other's hands.

Up to the removal of the cloth, when the hock, and champagne, and sparkling catawba, and golden sherry, and old port, and East Indian madeira, — all warranted pure, though manufactured to order, and not to cut in the eye, whatever the teetotalers might believe or say, — had begun to be felt like inward sunshine, setting every pulse a-throbbing, and every tongue a-going, — though Mrs. Maynard only lifted the glass to her lips, and Julia confined herself to the catawba, as least likely to be adulterated, and having most of the 'bottled velvet' Leigh Hunt used to think so much of, — the conversation, though changeable and free, was anything but sprightly.

According to established usage, over sea — as if wine and women could not coexist together — Mrs. Maynard, followed by Julia, rose to withdraw, as the waiter appeared with a supply of clean glasses and two or three new brands. But Mr. Fay, and Uncle George, and Arthur, started up from their seats with

such vehement protestations, that the ladies were obliged to give way; and, as two of the three gentlemen were fond of tea, and had just sipped their demi-tasse of strong coffee with the air of people who knew what they were about, and the third, Mr. Fay, was only so far gone, as to *try* a cigar in the presence of well-bred women, without blowing the smoke into their faces, they were not unwilling to be persuaded.

The conversation was very general, at first, and rather sleepy, though the changes were swift, and oftentimes amusing. From the distress of the poor, the panic, and the fearful looking for of — nobody knew what — although men lowered their voices to a whisper when they spoke of the future, — they wandered away to the opera, and then to the theatre, and then to the prayer-meetings, and to the new religious movement all over the country; and while Mrs. Maynard listened with such attention as the duties of the table would allow, without intermeddling, it was evident enough that Julia was watching and weighing every word that fell from the lips of Mr. Fay, and that Arthur was watching her, and that his mother had her eye on both.

Once, when Mr. Fay was complaining of the superabundance of music everywhere; of the unreasonable amount furnished at the Academy, and the tiresome length of the operas and concerts, Julia pricked up her ears, and began to show signs of impatience, greatly to the satisfaction of Arthur, who ventured to ask Mr. Fay if he was very fond of music.

"No, Sir," was the answer.

Arthur bowed and smiled, as much as to say, "I thought so!" and then tried to catch Julia's eye, but she avoided the look, and appeared unconscious, though her lip trembled, and her eyes lighted up, in a hurry.

"But allow me to add," continued Mr. Fay, "that I am not *very fond* of anything."

Arthur tried again to catch Julia's eye, but she was on her guard. She knew — she felt — that she was under inspection, and that every change of countenance would be remembered, and that she would have to answer for it, after Mr. Fay was gone.

"For I have always had a notion," said he, — "you'll excuse me, Mr. Maynard, that to be very 'fond' of anything is to be very foolish."

"Capital!" thought Arthur; "if my gentleman has not sprung the trap now, after baiting it with his own fingers, then I do not understand Julia's looks, that's all! Very clever, I dare say; but he has overshot the mark this time."

"And such indeed," continued Mr. Fay, "is the true meaning of the word, which is constantly misapplied; to be fond, is to be foolish."

Mrs. Maynard smiled, Uncle George laughed outright, and Arthur jumped for the dictionary, nearly oversetting the table in his hurry.

"Hadn't we better wait until dinner is through?" suggested his mother; "we shall have more time after tea."

"But I may forget, mother."

"I shall not," whispered Julia.

"And," continued the imperturbable Mr. Fay, "if you will remember to watch the faces of the people who most frequently crowd the concert-room and the opera, I think you will be ready to acknowledge that with most, the fondness for music, which they pretend to, is all fudge; that most of them would never go, if it were not so fashionable; that few enjoy the wonders of the art; and that they who most love music, are soonest tired of it."

"Are you serious, Mr. Fay?" asked Julia, with a look of unqualified surprise.

"Perfectly serious; and I never hear the cry of 'bis! bis!' or 'bravo!' or 'encore!' without feeling certain that the sincere lovers of music would no more call for a repetition of what pleased them, than they would call for a second supper, as soon as they had got through with the first. No, no, Miss Julia, the higher the flavor, the keener the relish, the sooner we tire, and the more unwilling we are to rub all out, and begin anew."

"I wish you would answer him, Arthur," whispered Julia, "I cannot, I am too much afraid of myself."

"Or of him?—which is it?"

Julia blushed and smiled; but observing her aunt's eye fixed upon her, she mustered courage enough to say, "One might well desire another peach, or another bunch of grapes, or another nosegay, though he might have no inclination for another supper, I suppose?"

Mr. Fay looked up, as if somewhat astonished, and Arthur was all agog.

"You are right, Miss Parry; and I am greatly obliged to you for the hint; I shall have to mind my ps and qs I see, if I meddle with music here,"—bowing,—"and all I now have to say is, that if people who love music desire to sit hour after hour, listening to variations and repetitions, they are no more to be blamed perhaps, though we may pity them,"—bowing again,—"than if they should rise from a feast of grapes, or peaches, to begin anew, or leave a supper they professed to be delighted with, only to order another just like it, by way of complimenting the lady of the house."

Here was something after Arthur's own heart; and so instead of sympathizing with Julia, who looked up as if she wanted to say, "How preposterous!" he began to grow good-natured, in spite of himself, but still refused to interfere.

After a little outside skirmishing, the Major and Mr. Fay, who differed widely upon almost every subject started, and especially upon the cause of the panic which had overswept the whole commercial world, got into a dead lock; Mr. Fay attributing it to the changes in our legislation, which the wisest could neither foresee nor provide for, as in all that concerned the tariff; while the Major insisted that of itself, and with reference to the laws that regulate commercial intercourse between communities and nations, it was absolutely causeless, and no more to be accounted for, than the cholera, or the potato rot, or the sudden outbreak of religious interest over land and sea, such as never had been heard of before; just as if God himself had taken the business into his own hands, to show his people their weakness, overthrowing the bulwarks of nations, opening China and the East Indies, and saying to the churches themselves, "Stand still! and see the salvation of the Lord!"

Mr. Fay was evidently very much struck with the Major's earnestness and enthusiasm; and after sipping his wine, with a bow to Julia, he partly led, and partly suffered, the conversation to flow into other channels.

"Now for it!" whispered Arthur to Julia, as they got upon the most dangerous of all subjects for the dinner-table, the com-

parative strength of parties. "You'll soon see the feathers fly; for Uncle George having made up his mind that we are all going to the — bugs, will never yield a hair's breadth."

Mrs. Maynard began to look troubled; Julia to finger the grapes, with her eyes fixed upon Mr. Fay, who was evidently doing his best, while Arthur waited the coming onset, with the most comfortable anticipations.

But suddenly the wind changed. Mr. Fay caught her eye, and after two or three rapid outline sketches of Webster, and Clay, and Taylor, and others whom he had been intimate with, he wandered off into the subject of women's rights, and assured the Major that in the Harrison campaign, though he had seen thousands of women collected in the open air, and sitting side by side with rough looking men, to hear the leading orators of the day, nothing had ever happened to make him wish them elsewhere — not a word, nor a look, so far as he knew — but their presence had always been salutary and humanizing. "And as women are the first teachers of our children, and what our children are now, that will our country be hereafter," said he, "I must acknowledge that, so far, I am always glad to uphold the rights of woman, and to put her in the way of qualifying herself as a teacher of youth, — our future President makers."

Here the gentleman, stretching forth his hand, startled Julia by crushing a large English walnut without the help of a nutcracker. Whereupon Arthur fired up, and seeing in Julia's countenance a slight expression of wonder, he grappled with two of the largest, and they instantly crumbled at his touch like the daintiest of meringues, or egg-shells; and then, seeing a smile flit over Julia's face, he colored to the ears, and turned away in a pet.

Other changes followed — and still others — and Mr. Fay appeared to be at home upon every subject that was mentioned, whether serious or sprightly. Painting, sculpture, literature, languages, were all passed in review, and a score of notabilities were sketched with a few masterly, but characteristic touches, and then dismissed. But for these changes, there was nothing to be hoped for — as everybody foresaw, though nobody would acknowledge it — but a long, tiresome, after-dinner gossip, with

tedious intervals of silence, and a still more wearisome evening. The wind was rising, and there were signs of a southeasterly storm brewing, so that Mr. Fay consented to put up with them for the night — if they would put up with him — and the Major, profiting by the occasion, threw himself headlong into the weather, and talked earnestly upon its influence on our judgments and hopes, and even upon our belief.

Mr. Fay concurred in all this, and finished by recommending that people should diet for unbelief, inasmuch as our worst hallucinations, and worst heresies, often proceed from indigestion, being of the stomach, instead of the brain.

Mrs. Maynard looked up with surprise; Julia started, and Arthur began rubbing his hands to himself under the table.

"Our opinions, my dear Sir," continued the imperturbable Mr. Fay, without changing or faltering, though he saw the need of great circumspection, "do very much depend upon the atmosphere. Once I believed no such nonsense. All weather was alike to me; but within the last five years, I find myself not much better than a live weathercock; and that too upon very serious questions." His voice deepened here, and there was a slight trembling at last, as if he was afraid to say more.

"Just so has it been with me for the last six months!" exclaimed the Major. "I find now, for the first time in my life, that gloomy skies overshadow my very heart. I grow dismal, peevish, even suspicious, and almost hopeless; and my joints tremble; and I make everybody about me unhappy; God forgive me! — though, as you say, it may be all owing to the weather."

"Or the stomach!" said Mr. Fay.

"Very true. But allow me to add, for the encouragement of these dear children, and of my poor sister, who begins to look troubled, as you see, that I believe I am outgrowing the deplorable weakness, the unmanly self-distrust, the pitiable hallucination, that possessed me two or three months ago; and that as I grow stronger, I grow happier, and much more reasonable, and am, in truth, not half so much to be pitied, as when you first saw me."

"Yes, and let me tell you that you have not a thousandth part

as much reason, whatever may be your health, for now," — lowering his voice, and leaning over the table toward the Major, — "*now* you are safe."

"You think so!" said the Major, drawing a long breath.

"Most assuredly!"

Here Mrs. Maynard, who had been listening to their conversation, through all the multiplied changes, while apparently occupied with Julia and Arthur, put her hand upon Julia's with an expression of devout thankfulness, and her lip quivered, and her eyes filled. To be *safe* in the judgment of such a man, was to have the load lifted anew, just when it had begun to settle down upon them, with an ever-growing weight of darkness and horror, all the more to be dreaded for not being acknowledged.

Mr. Fay began to feel that he was understood. His fine countenance lighted up, and his eloquent mouth was all alive with a sort of inward joy. "Shall I hand you an orange, Miss Julia?" said he, "or a bunch of grapes? I did not ask you to 'wine' with me, as I saw that you only touched the glass to your lips; and while I go for 'temperance in all things,' I am not afraid nor ashamed to take a glass of such wine as we have here," — bowing very low, — "and am quite as much opposed to the fashion, as to the fanaticism of the day."

Here the Major, who saw the direction of his eye, as he bowed, thought proper to justify himself. "These wines, Mr. Fay," said he, "are the gift of a dear friend — one of the best judges I ever knew — or they would not be found on our table under present circumstances, I assure you."

Mr. Fay breathed more freely. It was clear to Arthur, if not to Julia, that their guest had a purpose to accomplish, and that whatever it was, he had gained his point; for his countenance brightened up, and he spoke more cheerfully.

"Did you ever see a man, my dear Sir, willing to confess that he was no judge of wine? or that he did not love music?"

The Major smiled; Julia looked pleased, and Arthur somewhat puzzled, while Mr. Fay, pursuing his advantage, left the table, and coming round to Julia, and drawing his chair very close to her — closer than Arthur seemed to relish — leaned forward with one elbow on the table, and entered into a low,

earnest, whispering conversation with her. Arthur could not bring himself to listen, and yet, unless he moved away, at the risk of being thought rude, he could not help hearing enough to show the general drift of their conference. After a while Mr. Fay spoke in a somewhat louder tone. "Cheerfulness I look upon as a duty," said he; "as one aspect of true religion. Bright faces are a sort of household sunshine; and in my judgment," — glancing at the Major, and speaking just loud enough to be heard by Mrs. Maynard, — "no man living has a right to be unhappy at home; any more than he has a right to be wrong anywhere, at home or abroad."

"We are bound to seem happy, therefore, whether we are so or not, Mr. Fay?" said Arthur.

"And have no right to make others unhappy — if it can be helped," murmured Julia, just loud enough to reach her cousin, who sat bolt upright in his chair, leaning as far away from the whisperers as he could, without appearing to be out of temper, or like one refusing to be comforted.

"And it always *can* be helped, my dear," said Aunt Elizabeth, smiling affectionately upon her brother, who nodded a reply, and then drew his chair up to her side, so that the dinner-table was forgotten, and, without intending it, all were engaged in the same subjects, — and all so pleasantly, that nobody knew how the continual changes were brought about.

Arthur was unhappy, and felt ashamed of himself, without knowing why. More and more troubled with the growing intimacy and nearness, like that of household relationship, which seemed to be growing up, as they sat together, he began to wish himself out of the way; and at last, withdrew from the side of Julia, under pretence of looking out of the window and watching the changes of the sky. The wind was up, the clouds were drifting hither and thither in huge ragged masses, the windows rattled, there was evidently a storm brewing; it grew darker and darker, and just when he was on the point of calling attention to the strange appearance of the sky, the lightning blazed, and a tremendous crash of thunder followed.

For a moment he was blinded and stunned; he heard a cry, and thought the house had been struck; but when he had recov-

ered himself, and was turning to the help of his mother, who sat with her hands uplifted and clasped, while her brother stood over her, he saw Julia disengaging herself hurriedly, and with a look of amazement and consternation, from the encircling arm of Mr. Fay.

What was he to believe? what was he to think? There was no time for explanation, or inquiry; and so he flung out of the room, stole away to his chamber, and kneeling — yes, kneeling! — by the old arm-chair of his mother, which had been his chief comforter and earliest companion over sea, whenever he was in trouble — covered his face with his hands, poor fellow! and but for shame, would have wept aloud. One great and exceedingly bitter cry had escaped him, but for the sound of an approaching footstep. It was that of his mother. She had seen everything, and much that had escaped the notice of her son. That she was not a little astonished, and perhaps grieved, or at any rate disappointed, was clear; but she was not troubled, and though taken by surprise, felt inclined to make large allowances for Julia.

Entering the room softly, she took the head of her kneeling boy into her lap, and pressing her lips to his forehead, now damp with a cold perspiration, she waited in silence for him to speak first. But he was in no humor to speak first, or even to speak at all, — the lightning that had blazed through the room below, had illuminated the innermost chamber of his heart and overthrown its idol — an idol, though unacknowledged — an idol he had ignorantly worshipped, until it lay shattered and broken at his feet.

Unwilling to acknowledge the truth — even to himself — and ashamed to tell his mother of the self-deception he had been practising so long, or to let her see how terribly he suffered, he continued kneeling at her side, in a silence like that of the death-chamber; but the heaving of his shoulders and chest, and his labored breathing, told the story, the piteous, mournful story, in a language not to be misunderstood by a mother.

At last he rose up, and taking her hands into his, with a sickly, impatient smile he said to her, — "Mother, dear mother! not a word of all this to Uncle George — not a word to Julia — not a

word to me from this time forward, I beseech you, dear mother, upon this painful subject, whatever you may think, or hope, or fear."

"But, my dear boy!"

"Not a word, mother; I cannot bear it; it would kill me! I am too much of a girl, mother; I am too sensitive. I was never intended for a man. God forgive me!"

"What ails you, Arthur? What is the matter with you? Why do you cling to me so? Your eyes trouble me!"

"Oh, mother, mother, pray for me! Do not leave me to myself, or I shall go mad! You, and that old arm-chair, mother, are now the only friends I have left. When you are out of the way, I go to that for consolation; and when I kneel down there, and bury my face in my hands, I almost persuade myself that I am a little child again, — that my dead father is alive, with his hand upon my head, — that I am saying my prayers to you, and that I can hear you whispering the consolation I so much need. Promise me, dear mother! promise me faithfully, never to mention what you have seen, or thought, or hoped, either to Julia, or to me, while you breathe; for I tell you plainly, it will either drive me mad, or break my heart. Oh, fool, fool that I was, not to see whither all these things tended! Not for the world, mother — not for the whole world, would I have her know what I have suffered, — let me perish! — I can bear that, — I can bear anything, if I be not mocked, nor triumphed over, nor wilfully thwarted."

"I do not understand you, Arthur; — who is there to mock you? who is there to triumph over you?"

"Forbear, I beseech you! I have already gone too far. Good-night, mother!"

"Good-night, my son! — why, it is early in the evening, and you will be expected below!"

"Ah, indeed! Well then, all I have to say, dear mother, is, let them expect me, and perhaps I may appear to them with the next crash of thunder — as they did to me in the last. Good-night, mother!"

Well, my son, if you are not to be persuaded — good-night! Only don't go to bed, I pray you; the storm is still raging, and

you cannot sleep; and then, too, you may be wanted; and who knows but upon further consideration, you may think it best to drop in upon us, for a few minutes, before we retire."

"Perhaps I may. Good-night!"

"Good-night."

CHAPTER XV.

After pacing the floor awhile, stopping now and then to lean his throbbing head against the wall, and then throwing himself upon the sofa, and covering his face with his hands, while the hot tears trickled through his fingers, and fell drop by drop on the pillow, Arthur began to take a different view of the case under consideration, and to ask himself what he had to complain of. "Had he ever betrayed himself to Julia? Had he ever acknowledged — even to himself — that he had no hope in life, no wish, no desire unassociated with her? Was she not her own mistress, — above concealment, and wholly incapable of misleading him? And if so, how boyish — how childish — how unreasonable — for me to lie here!" he cried, springing to his feet, and beginning to walk the floor with a stronger, steadier, and more patient tread. "Am I, of a truth, but a poor sick girl, — a broken-hearted, helpless, hopeless, disappointed thing, ready for a cry at every change of the wind? Am I ——

—— 'to wear
My strength away in wrestling with the air?'

No, — never!" and he straightened himself up, and threw out his well-proportioned chest, and breathed manfully, as he continued pacing the room, to and fro, until he caught a glimpse of a pale, haggard face, with wet lashes — red eyes — and tumbled hair — in the lighted mirror. Blushing with shame and vexation, he caught up a towel, dipped it into the pitcher, and began sopping his hot cheeks, and cooling his forehead, with the passionate impatience of a school-girl, heated in a chase after butterflies.

By the end of another half-hour, his mind was made up — the controversy with himself ended; and after glancing at the mirror once more, to see if he was in fact presentable, down stairs he

went, fully determined to carry it off handsomely, — to brave the worst, — and see what they had to say for themselves below.

As he opened the door, he saw Julia sitting by his mother, with her eyes fixed upon Mr. Fay, who was talking in that low, smooth voice which Arthur had begun to be afraid of, with the large Bible open before him, and his right hand lying reverently upon the page.

Arthur took a seat in silence, where he could watch Julia, who looked up and nodded as he entered; but very much as if he had not been missed.

"Have the goodness to read the passage, Mr. Fay," said Aunt Elizabeth. "I remember the substance, — but I never thought of the application before."

"And yet, Madam, if you call to mind the character of the Czar, — the condition of the world, — the confederacy of kings, — and the strangeness and suddenness of his death, — and what might have been the consequences, if he had not been hurried away, I think you and your brother will acknowledge the startling sublimity of the application." And saying this, he read from the fourteenth of Isaiah, the following verses: —

"He who smote the people in wrath with a continual stroke, he that ruled the nations, is persecuted and none hindereth.

"*The whole earth is at rest,* and is quiet; they break forth into singing. . . . .

"Hell from beneath is moved for thee *to meet thee at thy coming:* it stirreth up the dead for thee, even all the chief ones of the earth: *it hath raised up from their thrones all the kings of the nations.*"

The voice of the man grew deeper, and thrilled their very blood, as he continued; Arthur was carried away with astonishment; and his mother looked up, as if she had never understood the passage before, and he saw by Julia's eyes that she felt every vibration of that strange, low, sweet voice in her heart.

"All they shall speak and say unto thee, *Art thou also become weak as we? Art thou become like unto us?*

"*Thy pomp is brought down to the grave,* and the noise of thy viols. The worm is spread under thee, and the worms cover thee!

"How art thou fallen from Heaven, O Lucifer, Son of the morning! How art thou cut down to the ground, which didst weaken the nations! . . .

"They that see thee shall narrowly look upon thee, and consider thee, saying, — *Is this the man that made the earth to tremble, — that did shake the kingdoms?*"

"There!" said Mr. Fay, as he finished, without looking up, — "there, my friends! if there be anything in the Bible worthier of God — more awful in itself — more overwhelming to the imagination, I should be glad to know it. We may see the buried kings of all the nations of the earth, rising up from their thrones of darkness, to question the dread Assyrian, — '*Art thou also become weak as we? Art thou become like unto us?*'"

The Major was the first to break the long deep silence that followed. Arthur was afraid to look at Julia; but he saw that his mother was spell-bound, — that his uncle was much moved, and that Mr. Fay had got possession of all three, so that he, himself, was on the point of acknowledging that he had never heard in all his life — anywhere — on the stage, or off — in the pulpit, or out — any reading to be compared with it; so unpretending, so scriptural, and so earnest; so undramatic and so natural, — so altogether unconventional. This, indeed, was what he had always wanted to hear, — audible thought, — articulate individuality, — the voice of the soul, — the sound of prophecy.

"But you were speaking of other, and yet more wonderful things, Mr. Fay," said Aunt Elizabeth; "and really, if you have no objection, I do not see how we could better pass what remains of the evening, than in hearing you read any other passages that may occur to you. The storm rages fearfully, you see, — and with a long night before us, and little prospect of sound sleep, — for a tempest that begins with thunder and lightning so early in the year, is not likely to abate for a long while — there seems to be an especial fitness in scripture reading."

"With all my heart, Madam," said Mr. Fay, — seeing Julia's countenance light up, and Arthur, himself, nodding assent to his mother.

"We were talking of the Prodigal Son, you remember; of Job, of Ruth and Boaz, of Joseph and his brethren, and of the pro-

digious dramatic power to be found in the Bible; and you went so far as to say that there were tragical passages and incidents generally overlooked, which, in their solemn strength, were both Hebraic and Shakspearian — if I understood you rightly."

"Very true, my dear Sir, and I was thinking of David and of Junius Brutus, — and then of Saul and Macbeth, and then, of Mordecai, I dare say. Brutus feigns madness you know; but just look here," — turning to 1 Sam. ch. xxi. — where the behavior of Achish, king of Gath, toward the outcast Hebrew warrior is recorded, and see if there is anything to be compared with the passage, where David, beginning to be sore afraid of Achish, 'changed his behavior before them, and feigned himself mad in their hands, and *scrabbled on the doors of the gate, and let his spittle fall down upon his beard:*' and then, too," he continued, after a pause, which enabled him to see the effect he had produced, — "just look at the account of Saul's interview with the witch of Endor, and at his death, on the top of Gilboa, and compare it with the death of Shakspeare's hero, and with his meeting of the witches upon the blasted heath, — and see how weak and childish are both in comparison with what we have here," — reading passage after passage in a way that held them breathless. "Both are doomed, and both know it, — and both battle to the last with unabated energy. '*To-morrow shalt thou and thy sons be with me!*' said the Spirit of Samuel; and yet, although he knew that the awful prophecy had been accomplished — that he was forsaken of God — that his hour had come, you see him standing up, and leaning on his spear, and bleeding to death, as the tumult of battle comes surging up through the morning mist of Gilboa; and then, without a sign of weakness or faltering, he throws himself upon his sword, like Cato, and dies in his golden harness. Compare that death, and all its foreshadowings, with the death of him who had been cheated by the 'juggling fiends' into a belief that he bore a charmed life, until he cries 'Lay on, Macduff!' and then say which is the mightier and the more awful, as a catastrophe!"

Another deep silence followed, and then, feeling that he was understood, he took up the story of Mordecai, and traced it, step by step, through all the successive unfoldings, — as if it were

only a drama — reading passage after passage — and so presenting the hatred and jealousy of Haman, as to make all his listeners wonder why they had never understood the story before.

A look of unqualified admiration from Julia satisfied Arthur, poor fellow! that however it might be with his uncle and mother, Julia was in for it, and no mistake.

After dwelling upon the mortification of Haman, as if he had been a witness of the whole transaction, he finished by saying, "There, just imagine Mordecai, the Jew, whom he had so hated and loathed, lifted into the saddle by one of the noblest princes of the land, — that prince being no other than Haman himself, the acknowledged favorite of Ahasuerus, — clothed with the king's apparel, and wearing his crown; and Haman going before him, afoot, and proclaiming aloud in the ears of the multitude who well knew the history of both, — 'Behold the man whom the king delighteth to honor!' and then just think of the gallows, fifty cubits high, which he had set up for the abominable Jew, only to perish thereon himself; and then say, if there was ever a more appalling, or a more natural retribution. He and his whole household perish miserably; and yet from the beginning to the end, there is no picturing, no embellishment, no exaggeration; and as we see the awful catastrophe unfolding, up to the moment when they 'covered his face' and hurried him away from the banquet hall, and the presence of the queen, to the gallows, we are all ready to acknowledge that his hatred of the poor man at the gate, who refused to do him reverence, when all the rest of the people, even the mightiest, were crawling in the dust before him, in the plentitude of his power, was not only the cause, but the only cause, of all the calamities that followed, step by step, as a predetermined, inevitable destiny. Talk of the simplicity and strength of the old Greek Drama! I know of nothing there — nothing anywhere — nothing in any language, to be compared with it, — unless, to be sure, the Danish Duvika, or Joanna Bailie's terrible De Montfort, written for the very purpose of illustrating the passion of envy, may be thought worth mentioning."

It was in vain to deny it! Notwithstanding the unqualified,

though serious and thoughtful admiration which Arthur saw in all the countenances about him, and felt so provoked with; and notwithstanding his great dislike of the man, and a barking suspicion that he was at best only a player, he could not help acknowledging that he himself had been quite carried away by his great conversational power, his quiet, unobtrusive boldness, and the startling originality of his language and manner.

"Now to you, my young friend, a born poet!" continued Mr. Fay, turning his large, clear eyes upon Arthur, as if he saw through and through him, and pitied the uneasiness he betrayed, and well knew how to make him, if not happier, at least more comfortable, — "to you, overflowing with the molten ore of true poetry as you are, the sunshine of a happy heart, on every tolerable occasion, — there, there, don't take the trouble to deny it! and pray don't blush so, like a great overgrown girl! — this book must be a treasure indeed."

Arthur started up, half beside himself with vexation; and yet, he could not help showing that he had been reached at last, — even *he!* — although he had no confidence in the "straightforwardness," or "downright honesty" of the man, the very qualities for which he was most admired by the Major; and though he didn't half like the smile that trembled about Julia's mouth, who sat listening in the shadow, with lips apart, and her dainty little hand playing nervously with the pieces upon a chess-table at her side; and so he sat more upright, and stiffened himself, and, bowing to Mr. Fay, waited for him to finish.

"You must have been delighted, I am sure," continued that gentleman, "and oftentimes astonished, at the self-arranging power of the language in our translation, — the Scriptural rhythm, the old-fashioned Hebrew tolling of many a passage to be found here, — having a voice of its own, like underground music, which could not be changed for the better; as where Job speaks of going 'where the wicked cease from troubling, and the weary are at rest;' and, by the way," — turning suddenly upon Arthur, — "why not try your hand upon that very passage, and *do* it into English verse? That you have an astonishing readiness in that way, my young friend, I happen to know, and if ——"

Arthur could bear this no longer. "What on earth do you mean, Mr. Fay?" said he.

"What do I mean! Why just this, and neither more nor less. I mean that you have a wonderful gift, which you are trying to smother; I have heard much of it from others," glancing at Julia, "and have not wholly forgotten — have you? — what happened in the carriage, when we were alone together for the first time, and after writing half a dozen lines in your memorandum-book, you repeated a part of them, unconsciously."

Arthur had now lost all patience; and seeing, as he thought, a determined purpose at work, and signs of intelligence passing between Mr. Fay and Julia, and his dear mother looking troubled and perplexed, he gathered himself up for mischief, and as he drew forth a little memorandum-book, and began rummaging over the loose papers, he added, in a low, quiet voice, "I understand you now, my dear Sir. I have a foolish habit of talking to myself sometimes in company, and I well remember — *now* that you have mentioned it — (Have a care, Arthur!) that on our ride into town the other day, you overheard me, and were obliging enough to signify as much. Ah! here's the paper now; I'll read it, if you please."

"By all means."

Whereupon Arthur read with great significance, —

> "Oh, can it be that we
> Are parted forever!
> Never again to meet,
> Never, oh, never!"

"Most beautiful and touching! And to my mind," said Mr. Fay, with a look of sincere admiration, "quite enough to show that you have not been misunderstood, nor overrated — by any of us."

What could be the matter with Julia! A sudden paleness overspread her face, and a richly carved queen dropped from her trembling hand upon the marble hearth, and lay there completely shattered. Stooping hurriedly to gather up the fragments, poor child! she overthrew another, and then another, with her sleeve, and at last, in her nervous trepidation, the table itself; and then, to finish the matter, she grew so red in the

face, and seemed so terribly distressed, that Mr. Fay took it upon himself to hitch up a little nearer, and taking her hand, as if altogether unconscious of what he was doing, and that all eyes were upon him, he began to soothe and comfort her, with a low murmuring sound, which nobody understood but poor Julia, who snatched away her hand somewhat pettishly, and turned from the searching eyes of Arthur, toward her aunt, with an impatient fling that astonished them all; and then her eyes filled, and Arthur's blood tingled, and the Major was all at sea, and Aunt Elizabeth speechless with amazement.

"And sometimes," continued Mr. Fay, just as if nothing had happened, "we find the language running not only into rhythm, but into rhyme; as where the Saviour says of them that do his will, 'The same is my mother, my sister and brother;' but enough," drawing out his watch, and fixing his eyes upon Julia, who sat a little behind her aunt, looking very pale once more, and twitching nervously at the embroidered handkerchief in her lap, which had been undergoing all sorts of transformations within the last half-hour.

"We are to have prayers, Mr. Fay, and if you have no objection," said the Major, as that gentleman rose to go, "will have them now, before we say good-night."

"Certainly! with all my heart," said Mr. Fay, seating himself once more, and somewhat farther from Julia, where he might watch the changes of her countenance, without being observed by others.

"Will you read, sister?" asked the Major, as he pushed the great Bible toward her.

She assented, and turning to Job, looked for the passage referred to, and then read, in her own sweet, mournful, quiet way, and to the evident surprise of her guest, whose reading but a little time before had so nearly disheartened them all, and made her especially shy of her accustomed modulations, about that other world, "where the wicked cease from troubling, and the weary are at rest."

While his mother was reading, Arthur, who had a pencil in his hand, with a bit of paper lying before him, so far forgot himself, that Mr. Fay supposed him to be sketching, for he appeared

lost in thought, and very busy, and the touches were hurried, slight and free, and for that reason were likely to be both significant and spirited.

"Will you lead in prayer, or follow me?" asked the Major, as Aunt Elizabeth finished the chapter, and shutting the book, turned away from the light, and Julia, covering her face with one hand, leaned her forehead against the high back of her aunt's easy-chair, and Arthur covered his eyes, and stooped reverently forward.

A bow was the only reply.

The Major fell upon his knees; and but for the presence of a stranger, and the fear of being called Methodists, all the others would have knelt with him — perhaps.

Having finished, the Major waited for the voice of Mr. Fay, without rising; but, on looking up, he found that gentleman already on his way to the door, as if he had not well understood what was wanted of him.

"Arthur," said his mother — not a little astonished at what she saw — "will you take a lamp and show Mr. Fay to his room?"

Arthur wanted to say something about poor Haman, and that abominable Jew, whom he had been obliged to wait upon — with all the honors — but he was in such a terrible humor, that he durst not hazard a pleasantry; and so he took the offered lamp, and bowing to Mr. Fay, with a little stiffness, it must be acknowledged, went before him, as if just ready to cry out, "Behold the man whom the king delighteth to honor!" when a sudden puff of wind blowing the smoke from the chimney and scattering the ashes all over the carpet, took the paper which Arthur had been toying with, and sent it fluttering toward the half-open door, where he stood with his hand upon the lock. Mr. Fay called his attention to it, and was stooping to pick it up, when Julia, leaning forward, anticipated him, and almost snatched it from the floor, in her impatient eagerness.

"Oh!" exclaimed Arthur, coloring to the eyes, and taking the paper from Julia's outstretched hand, "it is only a set of *bouts rimés*. I was thinking of the rhymes for *rest*, when mother read the passage Mr. Fay had been speaking of, where it is said,

'the *wicked cease from troubling*,' — with great significance of manner, and something of bitterness, — 'and the *weary* are at rest;' and so I wrote as you see here," — holding up the paper, — "the words *rest*, *oppressed*, and *breast*, and *crest*; overlooking two of the *best*, which have just occurred to me, *guest* and *chest*."

"Very good! — but some of the lines I see are finished," said Mr. Fay, glancing first at Julia, and then at the paper in Arthur's hand.

"What are they, Sir? — please read them," said Julia, in a beseeching tone, which Arthur didn't half like, when addressed to another, and that other a comparative stranger.

"With all my heart," exclaimed Mr. Fay, looking over Arthur's shoulder and reading with a great show of enthusiasm.

"'They came like trooping shadows o'er
A field of lighted snow,' ——"

"Excuse me!" said Arthur, — turning away from the strange face that seemed to be overlooking his very heart, as from a higher atmosphere, — "You must excuse me, Julia; and you, too, Mr. Fay."

Arthur's cheeks glowed; but he was not quite sure of himself; nor whether Mr. Fay was laughing at him, or not; for the gentleman's manner was not only respectful, but serious; and yet, sooth to say, there was a something which he did not altogether relish in the intonation of his voice. It did not sound like pleasantry, — nor was there anything offensive in it, or provoking, — but still Arthur was dissatisfied, and not only with Mr. Fay, but with himself; and so he made up his mind to be very patient, and on the morrow, if the storm should continue, and Mr. Fay should be embargoed, to have an explanation with him — if he could do so without making a fool of himself.

"But, I say, though, Mr. Maynard, why not fill up these blanks, and see what you can make of the rhymes?"

Arthur now began to see the man's real object, and was resolved to disappoint him. If Mr. Fay did not believe in the astonishing facility he had just given him credit for; and if, in a word, the request was either a challenge or a sneer, now was the time to answer it, as it well deserved to be answered.

"Nothing can be easier, I assure you, Mr. Fay," said Julia.

"Cousin Arthur often amuses himself, and astonishes everybody in this way, as I have told you."

"'*As I have told you!*' hey? Then," said Arthur to himself, — taking out a pencil and beginning to fill up the lines as fast as he could scribble, — "*then*, what the fellow knows of me, he knows from Julia herself — hang him!"

Within five minutes, he handed the paper to Mr. Fay, who read it aloud, and in such a way that Arthur had nothing to complain of, absolutely nothing; for he read with great simplicity and sweetness, and so dwelt upon the rhymes, without spoiling the sense, that they became obvious to the ear, without being obtrusive.

"Where the wicked cease from troubling,
And the weary are at *rest*,
There the loving and the trusting,
There the patient and *oppressed*;
There the wise and willing-hearted
Lean upon their Saviour's *breast*;
As the bird, that homeward driven,
With shattered wing and ruffled *crest*,
Forgets the storm, and sinks o'erwearied
To her own dear sheltering *nest*.
Be not faithless, but believing," &c. &c.

"Pooh, pooh!" said Arthur, catching the paper out of his hand.

"Very sweet and simple!" exclaimed Mr. Fay, with a look of such sincere and unqualified pleasure, that Arthur, who was far from being satisfied with the verses, began to be ashamed of his suspicions, and to forget the "abominable Jew."

"Very beautiful, to be sure," murmured Julia, just loud enough to reach her cousin's ear as he withdrew, lamp in hand, poor fellow, and afoot, with Mr. Fay following hard after him — on horseback — as if his right to the saddle was now acknowledged, even by Arthur himself.

Had flattery wrought this wonderful change in Arthur? or was it only, that for the first time since they had been fairly pitted against each other in the presence of Julia — on that new field of the cloth of gold — he had reason to be pretty well satisfied with himself?

No time was lost by Arthur in disposing of Mr. Fay, and

getting back to the room below, where he might follow up the investigation, however distressing and humiliating it might prove, which he and Julia had undertaken together. But how was he to manage? How were they to question each other, and compare notes, under the change of circumstances? And then, too, when he found them all sitting there silent and speechless, — Julia leaning her forehead against the back of his mother's chair, with her eyes shut, and looking very pale; his mother sitting with her hands clasped in her lap; and the Major leaning on both elbows, with his hands covering his face; — all buried in thought, and no one of the whole three willing to speak first, — he felt strongly inclined to steal back to his chamber without opening his mouth; but, as he reached his hand for a lamp, Julia looked up with a troubled and reproachful expression, which he could not bear, — and he hesitated.

"How very strange!" said the Major, at last, drawing a long breath, and uncovering his face, — "I cannot understand it!"

"Cannot understand what, brother?"

"I cannot understand Mr. Fay."

"You are disappointed, I see?"

"No, sister, I can hardly say that, — perhaps it would imply too much; but I am both grieved and astonished; — grieved by what has just happened, and astonished at his familiarity with Scripture."

"Though not always accurate, Uncle George," added Arthur, in a subdued, though somewhat of a questioning tone.

"Very true, Arthur; but having myself a wretched memory for words, I am always willing to make large allowance for another."

"But why grieved, Uncle George?"

Here Julia began to grow uneasy, and after a moment she withdrew still farther into the shadow, where she sat for a long while, without speaking or moving, as the conversation went on.

"For several reasons, Arthur. I do not think he misunderstood me, when I asked him if he would follow me in prayer, — I saw his look, — and I am satisfied that whatever else he may be, our beloved guest is not a man of prayer."

"I am sorry to hear you say so, brother," said Aunt Elizabeth,

glancing at Julia with a troubled look, "and yet, I must acknowledge, that from the first, I have had my misgivings. Do you remember what he said just before Arthur joined us, about the strange folly of those who put off the great question, because they do not know *when* they are to die? as if that very uncertainty were not the best possible reason that could be urged for immediate preparation?"

"Yes, and I must acknowledge that I was very much struck with his way of presenting the question; it was altogether new to me."

"What was it, Uncle George?" asked Arthur, with a trembling eagerness of manner, which might have betrayed the deep workings of his innermost nature to Julia, if she had happened to look up.

"It was to this effect, Arthur, — I cannot give the words, I only give the substance. He argued, that this very *uncertainty* was intended to keep us ever on the alert, and always prepared; just as it would be with a beleaguered garrison, if, instead of knowing the very day and hour of an assault, it were left uncertain. Would they be found sleeping on their posts, merely because they knew not *when* their adversary would be upon them?"

"Excellent!" said Arthur, growing earnest and magnanimous, while a change in Julia's breathing, as Aunt Elizabeth laid her hand upon the poor child's head, and smoothed her beautiful hair, with more than a mother's gentleness, betrayed the fact, that, although her eyes were shut, she was far from being asleep. "Excellent! so far as it goes, but what followed?"

"Illustration after illustration; you know how abundant they are," continued the Major, "and how happy, when he wakes up, and grows very earnest and persuasive, as in talking to Julia."

Julia made no reply; but Arthur saw, or thought he saw, a slight change of position, as the shadow shifted, and the caressing hand of his mother slipped after it, over the glossy hair.

"For example," continued the Major, "if we knew that we were to die on a certain day, at a certain hour, a month hence, or a twelvemonth, and not before, how diligent we should be in preparation! how the glories and the terrors of the upper world,

as we drew nearer and nearer to it, would loom upon us; growing more and more awful and astonishing every hour, till they filled the universe. And yet, just because the day is not fixed, — or not revealed to us — and for aught we know, it may be to-morrow instead of a twelvemonth hence, or the very next hour, we put aside all inquiry, postpone all preparation, and run for luck."

"Upon my word, brother George, you must never be allowed to complain of your bad memory again, while you breathe; for you have not only given the substance, but the very language of Mr. Fay, as I now remember, though I could not have repeated a single phrase myself, had my life depended on it, — hasn't he, Julia?"

A slight murmur from the deep shadow was the only reply; but there was another change of attitude, and a little foot was hurriedly withdrawn from the edge of a cricket, on which Arthur's eyes were intently fixed; almost pettishly indeed, as if she felt the look resting there.

"Well, my dear sister, and what then? You had your misgivings from the first, you say; and you called my attention to what we have just been talking about, as if, in some way or other, it had settled the question with you."

"No, no, — not altogether; I would not be rash in my judgment of others, and certainly not of Mr. Fay; but I must acknowledge — a — a" — hesitating — "upon my word, my dear brother, I am almost afraid to say what I think."

Arthur began to grow impatient; he was burning to say "Out with it, mother!" but the remembrance of what he had seen but a little time before with his own eyes, and the fear of being misunderstood, or of betraying himself to his mother, if he did not to Julia, withheld him.

"Afraid, Elizabeth! afraid to say what you think of that remarkable man!"

"Well then, to tell you the truth, from the first moment Mr. Fay laid his hand upon that Book, and began to talk so beautifully, and so eloquently, of the grandeur and beauty to be found in it, and of the wonderful dramatic power, which he went on illustrating, as you remember, I felt sure that if he was a Chris-

tian at all, he was not a meek and lowly Christian; there was too much of display, too much of a controversial spirit; in a word, brother, he talked altogether too well, to satisfy me."

Arthur wanted to jump about his mother's neck, and hug her to his heart. How entirely had she justified him, for the uncomfortable suspicions he had been struggling with, and trying to get rid of, hour after hour. He durst not look at Julia, and would not have had her see what there was at work within his heart just then, for the whole world.

"Upon my word, Elizabeth! I never knew you so uncharitable; never so harsh in your judgment, never so rash, I might say; and yet, as I live, my dear sister, when I looked up, after all he had been saying so beautifully and so truly, and saw him just ready to leave the room, instead of following me in prayer as I expected, I not only came to the conclusion that he was not a man of prayer, — and if so, not a Christian, — but that he was unacquainted with Christian usages and courtesies, or he would not have been guilty of such behavior."

"Especially after maintaining with perfect seriousness, that all the established forms of politeness and high breeding are but a counterfeit Christianity."

Here the little foot reappeared, and Arthur was all attention.

"And I must acknowledge," continued Mrs. Maynard, "that his illustrations were very apt, and that he almost persuaded me to a like belief."

"And how, pray? I am really curious to hear, mother."

"Well, he referred to Chesterfield, in proof; if we are well-bred, we are to sympathize, with a look suited to the occasion; we are to help others first, and to let others go before us, 'in honor preferring one another;' and we are to acknowledge ourselves the humble servants, not only of our brethren, but of our inferiors, &c. &c."

"And all this," added Uncle George, "only that we may *seem* to love our neighbor as ourselves; that we may *appear* to do as we would be done by; that we may be thought unselfish, and considerate, and of a lowly temper!"

A long silence followed, and Arthur grew very thoughtful.

"On the whole, then, dear mother," said he, at last, "I suppose

we may infer from what you said, that, notwithstanding all this, you want faith in Mr. Fay?"

"As a Christian, a devout, humble Christian, I must answer *yes;* though not as a man, and certainly not as a kind-hearted, largely-gifted, and well-educated gentleman," said Mrs. Maynard, looking at her brother for confirmation.

"I am afraid you are right, Elizabeth; and the more's the pity, for if he could but be persuaded, what a Christian he might be! He seems to know about everybody worth knowing, both at home and abroad; he has travelled much; he has written for most of the leading journals of Europe; he is acquainted with half a score of languages at least, and with all the learning and literature of the age, to say nothing of past ages; and they do say that his opinions upon music, and painting, and sculpture and architecture are regarded as authority among the professors themselves."

"Not in music, I hope, after what we have heard him say here," suggested Arthur.

Uncle George smiled.

"But how happens it, Julia, that you have not opened your lips for the last half-hour?" said he, laying his hand upon her beautiful head, as he spoke; "do tell us what your opinion of the gentleman is."

"Not for the world, uncle!" catching his hand to her lips. "I am too sleepy, and wretched; the day seems to me of a most unreasonable length, and we have done so much, and suffered so much, that, really, you must let me run off to bed. Good-night, all! good-night!" And with these words, uttered in a hurried, impatient, almost peevish manner, which filled poor Arthur with amazement and consternation, so unlike was it to anything he had ever known her to be guilty of before, she bid them all good-night once more, without looking at him, and vanished.

A long silence followed, which nobody seemed willing to interrupt, until the Major took a lamp, and seemed about to follow; and then, after a moment's consideration, to give up the idea; for he stopped short, and taking the hand of his "beloved sister," as he called her, he said, "perhaps you may understand all this, my dear Elizabeth, but I must acknowledge that I do not;" and saying this, he left her.

Arthur prepared to follow, looking as if afraid to be left alone with his mother; for she knew him too well, she had seen too much, and he trembled at the thought of being questioned by her, after what had happened, though it were only with a look.

"I understand you, my dear Arthur," said she, setting her lips to his forehead; "but you have nothing to fear; Julia is a woman, a proud, gentle, tender-hearted, loving woman; and all such women are mysteries, even to themselves. I thought I knew her well—I thought I understood her—and that, under any circumstances, I could foresee what she would do, but I acknowledge myself disappointed."

"Disappointed, mother! in mercy, do not say so of Cousin Julia."

"Disappointed I mean, with regard to my knowledge of her character; not with regard to her principles, her sincerity, her unchangeable truthfulness; but we must bear with her;—we must be very patient and hopeful, dear Arthur, and in due time we shall reap, if we faint not; and, notwithstanding her waywardness just now—forgive me, Arthur, if I have hurt your feelings—I have no doubt we shall be satisfied at last, all of us, you and I, and my dear brother, and poor Julia herself, that 'whom the Lord loveth, he chasteneth,' until we acknowledge that 'it is good to be afflicted.'"

"What a day,—what an everlasting day, to be sure!" said Arthur, as he turned away from his mother, and wiped his eyes, with something of a broken-heartedness which he had never felt before. "Good-night, mother, dear mother, good-night."

CHAPTER XVI.

At the end of a whole hour after Arthur had entered his little chamber, and flung himself into the old arm-chair, he found that he had not even begun the preparations for sleep, — not a button had been detached, not even his cravat had been loosened; and there he sat, leaning upon both elbows, with his hands covering his face, and the pocket Bible his mother had given him, when he first went abroad, lying untouched before him, though he had faithfully kept the promise he then made her, always to read at least one chapter in it, every day of his life.

The more he thought of all that had happened within the last few days, and especially on that long, overcrowded, dismal day, the more dissatisfied he was with himself. His cheek burned, — his very breathing changed, — and he could hardly sit still, when he reviewed the transactions of the evening, and thought of his own behavior, and called to mind the dignified and courteous bearing of the man he could not help acknowledging to himself that he almost hated; the trouble of poor Julia, and the sorrowful astonishment he had more than once detected in the loving eyes of that dear mother he had refused to communicate with.

He wanted to get up and walk the floor, — but was afraid of betraying himself and disturbing the house; he wanted to steal away to the bedside of that sleeping mother, and fall upon his knees to her, and acknowledge his waywardness and folly, and entreat her forgiveness; or to go forth into the midnight storm and hearken to the voices of the night — the far off thunder — the rattling hail — the great wind wrestling with the tree-branches, and the dull, ponderous, uninterrupted roar of the sea; and but for the drenching rain, and the fear that explanations might be called for, which would be mortifying to himself, just in propor-

tion as they might be satisfactory to others — to Mr. Fay, and perhaps to Julia — he would have done so, and walked the neighborhood, at least till he was tired enough to go to sleep without rocking.

How like a great lubberly boy he had behaved, to be sure, about the verses! and how unworthy of himself, and of what his mother and Julia, and even Mr. Fay must have expected of him, — to be so out of temper with everybody and everything, hour after hour, — and so unreasonable — and so childish! — and this, too, just when, if he had any proper respect for himself, or consideration for his mother, to say nothing of Julia, he would sooner have thrust his hand into the fire, than have so betrayed the innermost workings of his whole nature to that Mr. Fay. Oh, how bitterly he reproached himself, and how ashamed he felt, for having shown his hatred and spite, by capping verses, — and such verses! Why! what must Julia think of him, after what had happened at Mrs. Archibald's, where he had volunteered those feats of strength, of which he was so heartily ashamed, within the next hour, under the gentle ministering of *sister* Julia.

Poor Arthur! Almost beside himself with vexation and remorse, and out of all patience with Julia and Mr. Fay, when he recalled the mysterious and pitiful annoyances they had so lately gone through with; he began to take himself to task, and severely too, upon another and much more painful subject. Not only had he been moved by that unworthy jealousy which set Oliver Goldsmith breaking his shins over the chairs and tables, on hearing a monkey overpraised for similar feats, by a mischievous fellow; but he had forgotten that Mr. Fay was their guest, the friend of that Uncle George he so much reverenced and loved; that they were all under the greatest obligations to him, — and that he was there "in double trust," — and yet how had he been dealt with? How had these obligations been met, or acknowledged?

More and more grieved and astonished at himself, the more he thought of all these things, it was in vain for him to think of sleeping. He saw no encouragement, no ground of hope; he felt that he had been unjust, — that he had wronged the best friend of the family, by unworthy suspicions; for, after all, what business of his was it, if Julia *did* like Mr. Fay? Was she not

her own mistress, and free to choose for herself? And who, after all, had a higher claim upon the best feelings and best offices of the whole family?

Having reached this point, he began to breathe more freely, and felt happier, and at last, after another short struggle, to acknowledge to himself, though somewhat unwillingly, that Julia was not only the best judge, but the only judge of what would be likely to promote her own happiness, — that Mr. Fay was unexceptionable, to say the least; and that, however troublesome he might be at times, he was one of the most accomplished men, and one of the truest gentlemen he had ever met with, — high-bred, — self-possessed, — open-hearted, so far as he could judge, — and never to be taken by surprise, or caught napping.

By this time, Arthur had begun to feel somewhat sleepy, and much better satisfied with himself, at any rate; and while he was yearning for an opportunity, which he hoped to have on the morrow, of saying as much to his mother and uncle, if not to Mr. Fay himself, or Julia, — his eye fell once more upon the Bible, and he reached out his hand with a feeling of thankfulness, that he had not forgotten to read the promised chapter.

On opening at the mark, which he had left there the night before, the first words that met his eye were the following: —

"If any man lack wisdom, let him ask of God, who giveth liberally, and upbraideth not."

Struck with them, as he had never been before, he read them over and over, and then a thought of prayer entered his heart, like a spirit from the upper world. If any man lack wisdom, he has only to ask of God, — Ask, and ye shall receive, — Seek, and ye shall find, — Knock, and it shall be opened unto you, — Ye have not, *because* ye ask not.

All these passages came up before him, slowly at first, and as if all linked together, and then more swiftly, till they were like flashes of light, and the hair of his flesh rose; and he began to whisper to himself "*what hindereth?*" Were not the conditions reasonable? were they not easy? were they ever likely to be easier? would they ever be changed? Instead of requiring a great sacrifice, or doing some great thing, we have only to *ask*. And that we must do, — for if I read these promises aright, our

heavenly Father does not say, it shall be opened to you without knocking, — or that ye shall find without seeking, — that ye may enter without striving, — or that you shall receive, though you refuse to ask.

By this time the wretched young man — for he *was* wretched, and heart-broken for the first time in all his life; and for the first time he felt poor, and naked, and blind, and miserable — had slipped out of the chair upon his knees; and covering his face with his hands, he was trying to pray — only trying, not praying, as he thought — poor fellow! as if trying were not always praying — trying in humble, though almost hopeless faith, and without the help of language. What he wanted most, however, that wisdom of which God giveth liberally and upbraideth not, he was able to ask for; and the cry went up, and was heard and answered, though for a long time he knew it not; and with that wisdom from above, there came, at last, that peace in believing, that peace which the world cannot give, nor take away; that peace which passeth all understanding, that peace which Christ promised, with the Comforter, to all who might ever be led to think it worth asking for.

While he was yet struggling in wordless, though not voiceless prayer, and the Holy Spirit was pleading with him, and for him, "with groanings that could not be uttered," there was a tap on the door.

Springing to his feet with a new feeling of embarrassment, and almost of shame, he opened it, and there stood his mother in her night-clothes, weeping for joy.

Abashed and frightened at her look, as it wandered from the dressing-gown that lay on the floor to the untumbled bed, and then to the open Bible, he turned away; but she followed him, and throwing her arms about his neck, sobbed out, "Oh, my son! my son Arthur!" as if her heart would break; and then falling upon her knees, and drawing him down to her side, she broke forth like Miriam, not with a wail of sorrow, not with an exceeding great and bitter cry like Esau, but with a song of triumph and thanksgiving.

Unable to sleep, though she did not go immediately to bed, after she had parted from her boy, — partly on account of the

storm, and the trembling of the house, — and partly on account of her anxiety for him, — she had crept softly to his door and listened, again and again, at long intervals, hoping to find him asleep, or at least preparing for sleep; and after waiting awhile, she would steal back to her chamber, until at last, finding how much of the night had worn away, and fearing he might fall asleep in his chair, she had resolved to speak with him, and try to prevail upon him to go to bed. But while she stood listening at the door, with her hand lifted, and just ready for the signal, something within the chamber — a sound of weeping, she thought — and then, as of one talking to himself, — and then! could it be possible! a sound like that of earnest, humble, heart-broken prayer was heard, — which kept her silent and breathless, till she could bear it no longer, and with a cry of transport, she had entered and flung herself upon the bosom of her child; feeling that her prayers were answered at last, even though he, himself, might continue for a while in darkness. And what more could she ask for? What was there left under heaven, worth agonizing for, now that her dear boy, the only son of his mother, and she a widow, was in the way of salvation!

As they sat together, — she, with her arms about her beloved boy, and he leaning his head upon her shoulder, — their hearts overflowing with solemn joy and thankfulness, they were both reminded at the same instant of the prayer that had been offered by Uncle George at the Fulton Street meeting; and then, of that venerable man who had prayed for Charles with so much earnestness and fervor; and when his mother acknowledged that she had been haunted at times, ever since the meeting, with the recollection of that stranger's countenance and voice, until she had grown almost nervous in her anxiety to know more of him — as if he were the apparition of some old acquaintance or very dear friend, among the loved and lost — Arthur could forbear no longer.

"Mother," said he, gently detaching her arms and facing her as he spoke, — "dear mother, have you really no idea who that stranger was?"

"No, indeed; but why do you ask?"

"Have you never heard my father speak of an old and very dear friend by the name of Bayard — William Bayard?"

Had a spectre started forth from the shadow of the curtains, — had the apparition of William Bayard himself — or of any other among the loved and lost — stood before them, with outstretched arms and burning eyes, the mother could not have been struck speechless and pale as death, more suddenly.

"Water, water!" said she, gasping for breath, and trying to rise from the chair, and stretching her hands about in every direction, as if blind with terror, and groping for somebody in the darkness of midnight.

Arthur's first thought was to ring the alarm-bell, as soon as he had sprinkled her with water, and then to call for Julia or Uncle George, but his mother prevented him; and after rocking to and fro in the chair for several minutes, with her hands clasped tightly over her forehead, she grew calmer, the fixedness of her eyes abated, she drew a long breath, and then laying her hand gently and lovingly upon her boy, she whispered, — "Wait a few minutes, Arthur, and you shall know all."

"Mother, dear mother," he answered, falling upon his knees and catching her hand to his lips, "I have no desire to know all, — no wish to know anything, if there be any mystery here, — in the name of our blessed Lord and Saviour, I pray you not to answer me!"

"Excuse me, dear Arthur. I care not how you have been prompted to this. I care not how much, nor how little you know; but I have always intended to tell you, some day or other, when I should think it proper, and circumstances would justify me, what, in the providence of our heavenly Father, it would seem that He wishes you to know this very day — this very hour — just when you are rising up from the first prayer you ever breathed in your life, perhaps, as He would have you pray. See that the door is fast, — throw that shawl over me, — put on your dressing-gown, and seat yourself on that cricket, where I can see your face, and you mine."

"Yes, mother; but oh, in mercy, do not speak to me with that voice! do not look at me so! I tremble to think of what I have said; my heart is dying away within me, and the strength I had but a few minutes ago is all gone. Do not believe, dear mother, I pray you, that I have any unhallowed curiosity, any

unworthy desire to look into what you may choose to withhold from me."

"Thank you, my son; but I have no choice left. You have questioned me, and I must answer. Unhallowed or untimely, it matters not, — God will have it so; and I see his leading so clearly, that I dare not delay the answer. But first, allow me to ask, if you know Mr. Bayard?"

"Yes, mother."

"How long have you known him?"

"Ever since that unpleasant affair of which you have heard Julia speak, when the gold chain was snatched from her neck, near Burton's theatre. He followed me to the St. Nicholas, and there he told me that my father was the dearest friend he ever had on earth, and that he had known me from the first, on seeing me with my hat off and hair flying, by my resemblance to you; and then he said something about the past, which I did not quite understand; — you look troubled, mother, and your eyes are full of anguish and sorrow."

"Go on, Arthur; let me know the worst."

"The worst, mother! what do you mean? I have told you the worst, already. He appeared so deeply moved when he spoke of you, that I was afraid to question him further; and when he talked in a strange, rambling, mysterious way, about having watched over my father, and promised to watch over me in the same way, after satisfying himself upon two or three points, I began to have my misgivings."

"Misgivings! Of what nature, pray?"

"Well, dear mother, to tell you the truth, I began to fear he might be a little touched."

"A little touched! I understand you, son; and that is just what I have always feared. There lies the dreadful mystery which drove your father abroad, — an outcast and a wanderer, as you have heard him say more than once, to my knowledge."

After a long pause, and a struggle which alarmed poor Arthur even more than all she had said before, she grew calmer; and turning to him, with a countenance full of motherly tenderness, and high religious hope, she said, —

"Listen! That William Bayard is one of the best men I ever

knew, or ever heard of; one of the most faithful to every obligation of life. His father's family and mine were neighbors; and though he was much the elder, we were playfellows from my earliest childhood. At last — I cannot stop long enough to go into particulars — our childish friendship underwent a surprising change, and before we well knew where we were, ripened into something holier. In short, we were engaged to be married. I was very young — a mere child in years — and my father and mother insisted on what I myself must acknowledge was but a reasonable delay. Bear with me for a moment."

Here she pointed to the tumbler, which Arthur handed her; after wetting her lips, and wiping her eyes, with a very unsteady hand, she continued, —

"Meanwhile, I became acquainted with your father. He had been brought to our house and introduced to me by Mr. Bayard. They were like two brothers; and though belonging to the society of Friends, and wearing the garb of that sect, were acknowledged for the two handsomest men of their day, and among the best educated and most highly accomplished. But your father was a fashionable man, — showy, adventurous, and far from being peaceable; in fact, although he was a member of the society, and greatly esteemed, he would not have been suspected to belong to them, but for the single-breasted coat he wore. In everything else, — from neckcloth to shoe-buckle, and in speech, also, he was a man of the world. We were very intimate, — like brother and sister; and I had no idea of any lurking preference for him, until a few days before the time fixed for my marriage with Mr. Bayard, when something happened, which, but for God's mercy, would have driven me distracted. A friend of my mother told her, that, in the family of Mr. Bayard, there was an hereditary taint of madness, which, for three generations, had never failed to show itself soon after marriage.

"My mother was frightened; and my father lost no time in satisfying himself. The story was true; but somehow or other, he was led to believe it had been greatly exaggerated; and that, in two or three cases, the insanity had proved to be inoffensive and harmless, and passed with strangers for nothing worse than a little oddity, — a sort of whimsical temper, such as we are always

ready enough to bear with, or overlook, unless alarmed with the fear of something behind, like a predisposition.

"I grew very unhappy. I could neither eat nor sleep. I knew it would break the noble, generous heart of poor Bayard, if he should ever come to a knowledge of these facts; most of which had been always kept from him, while others were so represented and so softened, that he, as I had reason to believe, had never understood their true character.

"While I was debating with myself, and trying to make up my mind — for I was determined never to marry him, with this awful fear upon me — it occurred to me, as my only brother was abroad — your uncle George — to ask your father what he knew of the family, and what he had reason to believe. He refused to answer, at first, and treated the question very lightly; until I declared to him, that, until satisfied beyond a reasonable doubt, upon the point, I would never marry his friend; and if driven to it, I should tell him so myself, though I would rather die. Then, seeing that I was not to be moved, he acknowledged that, although there might be some exaggeration, the substantial facts were not to be questioned; and that the heritage of woe had been bequeathed from father to son, or rather from mother to son, — for the infirmity was on the side of the mother, — had continued through several generations, and in the last, — of which he had reason to believe his friend William knew nothing, — had been greatly aggravated. Originating at first with the intermarriage of cousins, it had gone on and on" ——

Arthur turned pale; but so managed, that his mother did not observe his emotion, as she continued, —

"On and on, till it had assumed an aspect much more alarming than it had been with the last generation; so that, instead of a quiet melancholy, or a trembling apprehensiveness, it had assumed the character of decided hallucination.

"This, you will acknowledge, my dear boy, was enough, or ought to have been enough to satisfy me; but it did not. Disregarding all your father's remonstrances and entreaties, and expostulations, and afraid to trust my father and mother with the power of deciding what I was bound, by every principle of duty, to decide for myself, I insisted on seeing the family phy-

sician of the Bayards; after which I meant to be governed by circumstances.

"Your father yielded at last, and I saw no less than three of the faculty, apart first, and then together, for I was both wilful and conscientious; and the result was, that all my worst fears were confirmed, and every doubt removed. But why had the unhappy man himself been kept in ignorance of what so many others knew? The answer was, that, inasmuch as the malady had not been developed in him, and there was nothing to complain of in his behavior, beyond a little oddity of manner, great earnestness, or enthusiasm, and great fixedness of purpose in whatever he undertook, — which, in another, would have been called steadfastness, and but for the suspicions entertained, and the watchful anxiety of near friends, might have been thought heroic and worthy of the highest praise, — they were unwilling to run the risk of a revelation; for should he be suddenly enlightened, and just now, when about to enter into marriage, the disease might be fearfully exasperated, and break forth in some new and terrible shape, instead of dying out — as they hoped it would — under the influence of a young, devoted wife, in its own deep, mysterious, unvisited lurking-places. Their opinions had weight with me, I acknowledge, but they failed to satisfy. It was no longer possible to think of marriage with him, and as the day fixed upon was very near, what excuse could I give? Would anything but the simple truth answer my purpose, or avail with such a generous, loving, noble-hearted man? Was I to steal away from the fulfilment of a promise made in perfect faith, and, I may add, in perfect love, and allow him to regard me forever, as changeable and capricious, or it might well be, as a wayward, heartless, unprincipled flirt? For I had openly acknowledged, not only my admiration for William Bayard, wherever it was proper and becoming to do so, but my sincere affection for him.

"Your father saw my purpose, and after expostulating with me, and using every argument he could think of, to dissuade me from what he foresaw I intended to do, he lost all patience with my wilfulness, and we quarrelled and parted; and his last words were — I never shall forget them — nor the look with which

they were accompanied, as he turned back for a moment, after he had reached the door, and said to me, 'You little know what a tremendous accountability you are taking upon yourself, — you do not understand the case, nor even the character of poor William, — and I see that nothing we can say will change your desperate purpose; but mark me! if you give the true reason, without qualification or concealment, one of two things will certainly follow: ——' 'What are they?' said I, beginning to feel a most uncomfortable suspicion of bad faith stealing into my heart, I hardly knew why, for Harper Maynard was the last man alive to be suspected of treachery; but so it was — and I only mention the fact — and when it flashed upon me all at once, while his burning eyes were fixed on me, and he was holding both my hands between his, and trembling from head to foot, as if on trial for his life — that all the satisfying evidence I had upon the subject had been furnished by him, or through him, I lost all command of myself, and repeated the question, '*What are they?*'

"He let my hands drop, and slowly answering, said, 'Tell him, Elizabeth, when you begin, to set his house in order; for, as the Lord liveth! what you are determined to say will either drive him mad upon the spot, or kill him outright.'

"'I don't believe a word of it, Harper Maynard!' said I, 'and come what may, he shall know the truth, and the whole truth before I sleep!' You shudder, my dear son — you are astonished at my presumption, — and so, indeed, am I; — it was little better than madness to do what I had threatened, but I did not so well understand your father's character then, as I did afterward, or I might have been more manageable, or at any rate, more reasonable; and, but for the dreadful suspicion I had begun to entertain, I should have consulted my mother, and perhaps my father, and have taken more time for consideration. But my temper was impatient; I was both headstrong and imperious, and the moment your father left me, I despatched a servant with a note for Mr. Bayard. He happened to be on his way to see me, — and within a few minutes we were sitting together by ourselves, and talking together, face to face; but I cannot pretend to give you an idea of what followed. There were times during the interview, when I felt as if the last words of

your father were about to be fulfilled, — that I had wronged him beyond all hope of reconciliation or forgiveness, — that the judgment of God was upon me, and a retribution so terrible, for my rashness, that either William Bayard or I must go mad upon the spot."

"Compose yourself, dear mother! You frighten me; why not defer the explanation till to-morrow?"

"No, no! — if I do not finish it now, I never shall have the heart to do so; and even to-morrow may be too late. Bear with me a few minutes;" — and then she resumed, —

"After a whole hour, with much weeping on my part, and praying on his — for he was a man of prayer — he acknowledged that in his early boyhood, he himself had observed something strange in the behavior of his mother; and at some time, he could not say how long before, he had been greatly amused at some of the stories told of his grandmother, and of relations on the mother's side; but never, never had he been allowed to suppose the taint hereditary, or allied to madness. 'But,' said he, after thanking me with a fervor and earnestness, wellnigh overwhelming, and almost enough to change my purpose, if anything on earth could have changed it, 'you have done right, Elizabeth. If it be as you say, — and I mean to know for myself, and judge for myself, before I meet you again, — I shall but love you all the more, and reverence you all the more, so long as I breathe the breath of life, my dearest of earthly friends, for your conscientiousness and generous openness. It would have broken my heart, or driven me distracted, Elizabeth, had you cast me off without justifying yourself. I might bear to give you up — I might be willing to lose you — but I could not forgive you, I fear, if you had concealed the truth. I could not outlive your unworthiness, I know. To-morrow,' he added, 'I will see you again. Do not be away, I beseech you. Say nothing to your father or mother, and be ready to see me whenever I may call; and if it should be as you and I both have reason to believe, why then — then, Elizabeth — my dear Elizabeth, — although there must be an end to the pleasant dream of marriage, and everlasting companionship, yet there will be no end to our reverence and love — I hope. It will endure with me, forever and forever!'

"'And with me,' said I, 'for ever and ever!' And here we parted."

"Dear mother!"

"On the morrow, he returned, bringing with him your father. He was very pale and serious, but gentle and self-possessed; and I saw, the moment they entered the room, that the dreadful question was decided — and forever. Both were so haggard — so changed — and their countenances were so full of woe and hopeless misery, that I wanted to hide myself in the holes of the rocks.

"'Elizabeth,' said Mr. Bayard, taking my hand as he had never taken it before, 'you have deeply wronged poor Maynard,' — your father would have interfered, but Mr. Bayard put him gently aside, and continued, — 'You have cruelly misunderstood him. All that you have been told of my unhappy predisposition, — of the awful abyss upon which our feet were wandering but yesterday, as in the garden of the Lord, is true. But my friend was faithful; and not only was he faithful to me, but to you, dear Elizabeth; and though I thank our heavenly Father from the bottom of my soul, my dear friend, that you did not follow the counsel of others, but only the generous and lofty impulses of your own loving heart, yet I cannot bear to have you unjust, or my friend Harper misunderstood.'

"I was deeply affected. The solemnity of his look awed me; and though I was half blinded with my tears, I went up to your father, and offered him both hands. Forgive me! said I; — make what allowances you can for me, and let us continue to be friends."

"'That is all I desire,' said Mr. Bayard. 'Henceforth we are to be friends — unchangeable, steadfast friends; — but so far as we two are concerned, my poor Elizabeth, nothing more; all other hope is ended. How it may be hereafter with *you*,' he added, after a short choking pause, 'I cannot foresee; for while I forego what I have learned to look upon as the great purpose of my life, and all that was worth living for, I am strengthened for the sacrifice, by remembering that Harper Maynard is the truest friend I ever had, Elizabeth, and in no way unworthy of our love; that he has long understood your character, and that,

hereafter — but no, I will hazard no more prophecies — farewell, dear Elizabeth! farewell, forever!' And the next moment, after drawing me up to his heart, and kissing my forehead convulsively, he was gone, and, perhaps, to death, — for I entreated your father to follow instantly, and not lose sight of him, — and I never saw William Bayard afterward."

"Never, mother?"

"Never, to know him, Arthur."

"Would you like to see him again, dear mother?"

"Most assuredly; for I have an idea that he has followed me and mine from that day to this, like a guardian angel, working wonders for our help, when your father was in trouble, and watching over us abroad and at home, and taking a deep interest in whatever concerned us, year after year, without betraying himself."

"But why, dear mother, were you so unwilling to mention the subject? What had you to reproach yourself with?"

"I hardly know, my son. Though upheld by my judgment, and having a conscience untroubled, I was never quite satisfied with myself; and when, at last, I married your father, and soon after understood that this noble-hearted man took it very hard, and shut himself up from the world, and that, when he went abroad again, he was so changed that nobody knew him; and that for many a long year, as he wandered over Europe with his hair all white, and wearing the plainest of Quaker clothing, he passed for a madman, or a visionary, I could not help reproaching myself, not for having refused to marry him — for my conscience never upbraided me for that, I assure you — but for marrying your father so unexpectedly, and so soon; for that, I see now, must have seemed heartless; and I have reason to believe that he suffered more from that act, which he never understood perhaps, than he ever had from our first separation; for he left the country the very next day, and we knew not for many years whither he had gone, though much inquiry was made by ourselves and others; nor in fact, whether he was alive or dead, until he suddenly reappeared, not in person, but by proxy, just when he was most needed, and when, but for his timely interference, your father would have been ruined forever, and might

have gone down to the grave with a blasted reputation; but of this, hereafter."

Saying this, the mother got up from the chair, and after straining her boy to her heart once more, and bidding him go straightway to bed, and there lie till he should be called to a late breakfast on the morrow, she left him.

It was near daylight, and Arthur had no inclination for sleep. Still, as the crowded occurrences of the day, so multiplied and so strange, were not to be got rid of, he tumbled into bed; and notwithstanding the wind, and sleet, and heavy rattling rain upon the roof, and against the windows, he slept like an overwearied child on the lap of its mother.

On the morrow they all met once more at a very late breakfast — all but Julia, who complained of a sleepless night, and a distracting headache.

The storm continued, but Mr. Fay did not. After wandering hither and thither for a whole hour, and lounging about on the sofa, looking at the papers of yesterday, and watching the weather, and, seeing no signs of Julia, in spite of all the Major could say or do, he ordered the carriage, and took his leave.

But Arthur had managed to atone for the deplorable misbehavior he had been guilty of the night before; and now that his eyes were opened, and he had begun to feel better satisfied with himself, and Julia did not appear, and Mr. Fay had to go without seeing her, he began to feel more kindly toward that gentleman, and went so far, after he had been gone awhile, as to acknowledge, in so many words, that he was not only one of the most intelligent and accomplished, but one of the handsomest men he had ever met with.

So much for a pleasant sleep! and so much, it may be, for a word of prayer, after the troubled heart had cast off the great burden of bitterness and sorrow.

But, strange as it may appear, Mr. Fay had not only grown more intelligent and more accomplished, handsomer and more gentlemanly, in the estimation of our young friend Arthur, from that hour of patient self-examination, upon his knees, and in the presence of God; but dignified and courteous, and so far from being unreasonably tall, and awkward and shapeless, and repulsive

and crafty, as he had appeared from the first; but a well-proportioned man, with a generous mouth, and the finest eyes in the world — large, clear, and burning with inward light, and changeable as the deep sea with clouds drifting over it, — with great ease and strength of manner, which, if not graceful, was both impressive and conciliatory; and then, too, the craft and coolness of which he had complained so bitterly to himself, whenever he thought of all that had happened between them, while they were together, or with Julia, from the first, and with his uncle George, — what were they, after all, but the outward signs of that inward power which rendered him so desirable a friend in their present circumstances, and which enabled him to take the position he occupied at the bar, against half a hundred worthy competitors, and to hold it against all the world? It was the quiet, unchangeable steadfastness — the silent wilfulness — the perfect self-command of Wallenstein, as pictured by Schiller in the great battle of Leutzen. Such men are never to be taken by surprise, come what may; and the knowledge of this fact deters their adversaries from trying many a favorite stratagem, — for every baffled stratagem is a converted spy; all the more dangerous to one party, for being no longer dangerous to the other.

Of all that his mother had told him about her past life, and of his father, nothing had troubled him so much, as the unpremeditated, unintentional testimony she had borne against the intermarriage of cousins. Although he had begun to think of Julia, as he had never thought of her before, and kept saying to himself that no man was worthier of her love, so far as he could judge, than Mr. Fay himself; and though he believed in his heart, poor fellow! not only that he was ready to give her up, if her happiness might be promoted by the companionship of another, and that other the very man he had almost hated a little time before; but that he had given her up — and forever — without stopping to inquire whether his conjectures were well founded or not, nor whether her happiness would be promoted by such a companionship; yet, notwithstanding all these magnanimous resolves, he felt unhappy, — miserable — utterly discouraged, when he thought of this new barrier in the way of all future hope and possibility, and wanted to steal away and hide himself, he cared not how, nor where, from the questioning eyes of his mother.

CHAPTER XVII.

Day after day passed, with few incidents and no changes, until Arthur and Julia appeared to be satisfied that the time for explanation had gone by, and both fell into the habits of intercourse, which mothers are most likely to be pleased with, where the parties are in no immediate danger.

Arthur had grown serious, and Julia thoughtful; and though they were often left alone together, and neither had entirely forgotten the arrangement entered into on their way back from their visit to Edith Archibald, yet Arthur never thought of saying *sister* Julia, nor Julia of calling him *brother*, instead of cousin. Both, in fact, were under some restraint, — both uncomfortable, if they were left long together, — and both embarrassed, whenever they met in the presence of Mr. Fay, who had now become a regular visitor at the cottage, — dining there two or three times a week, and always taking a bed.

Unwilling to interfere with Mr. Fay, Arthur grew generous, and either spent his evenings away, or withdrew to his chamber at an early hour, and rose very late, so as to give him every opportunity he could wish, morning, noon, and night.

A whole month had now passed over. The weather was beautiful and soothing; the trees began to feather and tremble with new life, and everywhere the waters were gurgling and rippling, and the flowers budding and blossoming. And so were the daughters of the land — as if they had nothing better to do — scattering perfumes with every puff and sweep of the wind, whether along Broadway, or in the secret places of Greenwood, till every breath of air told of their presence and whereabouts, and strong men grew sleepy and faint with acknowledgment, as they floated by.

For a time, on finding how much they were alone together, and how little he was allowed to know of what was going on, Arthur grew more and more uneasy every day, and being too proud to question his mother, or to watch Julia, he managed to keep out of the way, until he was almost a stranger; and, at last, it so happened that, whenever Julia rode out on horseback, for her health, it was no longer with Uncle George or cousin Arthur, but always with Mr. Fay, of whose beautiful horsemanship, even his mother was never weary of talking. Under one pretence or another, if they went for a drive through the neighborhood, or over to the battle-ground, or along by the sea-shore, Mr. Fay and Julia were seldom in sight — either a long way ahead, or a long way in the rear, and almost always in what appeared to be very earnest conversation.

Arthur grew more and more serious and stately, and Julia more and more reserved and silent; and as they had never come to the explanation both had been hoping for, though neither would acknowledge it, and Arthur was preparing to go abroad, they were likely to separate, if something did not happen to change their new relationship, as they had never separated before, in all their lives. Their hearts were heavy and sore; but with all her conscientiousness, Julia was a proud creature, and Arthur too unreasonable for what was wanted. Each misunderstood the other; and for want of a few words — a look — or a touch, — these two dear friends, who loved each other, after all, with something more than the tenderness of a brother and sister, were in the way of utter alienation, without foreseeing the consequences, or the wretchedness they were preparing for themselves. They were too much alike, perhaps, and neither would speak first.

But one day, as he stood upon the piazza, and Julia alighted upon the new turf, with a flushed countenance, and eyes full of earnestness, after a long ride with Mr. Fay, and without allowing him to help her off, Arthur saw a look pass between them that troubled him, and immediately, without stopping to change her dress, or to throw off her hat and gloves, or even to lay aside the silver-mounted riding whip Mr. Fay had just given her, she swept by him into the back parlor, followed by Mr.

Fay; and as Arthur went up to his room, a few minutes after, he saw them sitting together upon the sofa, and talking together in a way which left him no longer in doubt, and he determined to act accordingly.

"To-morrow, at half-past ten, if you please, I shall be at the door," said Mr. Fay, after a few minutes had passed. "It would be well, perhaps, to ask your cousin Arthur, — or shall I? He may be wanted for a witness."

Arthur did not hear Julia's reply, but from something that followed, he was led to infer that his mother and uncle were both to be of the party, whatever it was, and that witnesses were wanted. "Could it be possible?" thought he. "Can they be going to church — or to be married privately — and I to know nothing of their purpose, till the very day has arrived? Can it be that my dear mother has been afraid to trust me, or that Uncle George knew I had been kept in the dark? But why in such a hurry, and why do I see no preparation? Of a truth, if it were anybody else, I do think I should call it unmaidenly, if not unseemly."

A tap at the door.

"Come in," said Arthur.

"To-morrow," said Mr. Fay, "your cousin Julia goes before the grand jury. I cannot be with her, — but you must, — and as you, yourself, may be wanted for a witness, we have arranged it with your uncle and mother, for you all to go in the same carriage. This will leave me free to act as the circumstances may require. She will not be detained above an hour, — and perhaps not so long. I have explained everything to her, and all you have to do, is to attend her to the door of the grand jury room, and there wait for her, till she is returned to your hands. I do not think your mother will be wanted, but she may."

Arthur trembled with shame and vexation. Here was another mystery cleared up, and that so naturally, and with so little effort, as to leave him without a shadow of excuse, for the headlong precipitation of his judgment.

He had observed that Uncle George was beginning to lose flesh, and look troubled; that within a few days he had been forgetful, and absent in mind; but as he did not know when the

next move was to be made in court; as Mr. Fay appeared to feel no uneasiness whatever, he had never once thought of the possibilities involved. But now — now that the grand jury were mentioned — and the dreadful signs of preparation were multiplying about him, — whispered conferences, — anxious watching, — paleness, — and the change of look and step we so readily observe in seasons of sorrow and alarm, he felt aggrieved and astonished; aggrieved, that while others were evidently prepared for the coming morrow, he was left in the dark; and astonished — utterly astonished — that his dear mother should not have kept him informed. Poor boy! How little did he know of the purposes or plans of Mr. Fay; not one hour of uneasiness would he ever subject anybody to, not even a murderer, if no advantage was to be hoped for. "No, no," said he, "'sufficient for the day, is the evil thereof;' and a sleepless night is far from being what women most need at such a time — preparation. Julia, I have been obliged to apprise; for, until to-day, I have not been able to foresee when the case would be called up."

No uneasiness did he betray; and yet there was none of that professional indifference — that want of sympathy — that chilling heartlessness, which the poor trembling wretch, who has committed himself, body and soul, to a man of the law, so frequently meets with, until you see him dying by inches of hope deferred — not the hope that maketh the heart sick — but the disappointed hope — the hope of finding what he had bargained for, when he laid bare the dreadful secret of a wasted life to a friend that sticketh closer than a brother — so long as the money lasts, and he is allowed to share and share alike in the profits of their copartnership; — heartfelt sympathy, strengthening encouragement, and compassionate cheerfulness, at least, if nothing more.

Meanwhile, the strange, though very pleasant intimacy which had sprung up at a single interview, between little Edith and Julia, had ripened slowly, but steadily, into the tenderest and warmest of sisterly friendship. Unlike as they were in general character and temperament, one being serious and thoughtful, and reserved; the other, wayward and playful, and, to all appearance, very communicative, they were nevertheless wonderfully alike in the distinguished attributes of youthful womanhood, —

when the heart is in flower, and the mysterious currents of her inner life begin to "ripple to the finger-ends," and the voice changes, and you may know what she is dreaming of, by the shadow under her drooping lashes, by the trembling vibration of her finger-tips, when they touch yours by accident, as you stand by her at the piano, and turn the music for her. Both were shy and sensitive — both almost haughty in their natural bearing toward strangers, and especially toward the inquisitive and the meddlesome; yet both were conscientious and high-principled, and upon what they believed proper occasions, both were openhearted, and full of unsuspicious, childlike trustfulness and gentleness.

Mrs. Archibald and Mrs. Maynard and Uncle George had become pretty well acquainted, and arrangements were in progress for having all three — Mrs. Archibald, the baby, and poor little Edith — all four, indeed, for Carlo was the first invited, — brought over to the cottage, for a month, on trial; after which, if Edith grew stronger, and there should be room enough and to spare, and if the baby and Carlo should not manage to disturb the whole neighborhood, nor turn the house inside out, there was a hope that, of the two families, now consisting of two mothers, two middle-aged widows, who were widows indeed, though still young enough to be delightful companions for the married or the unmarried — two blossoming maidens — one sprightly young man — a dog — a baby, and a capital specimen of the old bachelor, in the finest preservation, and not "ower young to marry yet," something more might be made, after awhile.

Other things had happened too, which Arthur had not forgotten, though they were never mentioned. Letters had been received from Charles, of a startling, though somewhat mysterious character, of which, for the first time in all his life, Arthur was permitted to know nothing; and once, while wandering in the rear of the Washington parade ground, on his way to see the captain of a ship, soon to sail for South America, whither he was preparing to go, by the advice of Uncle George himself, who had spent a large portion of his life there, and was acknowledged to have had great influence with the Emperor, Don Pedro, — he came suddenly upon the little row of cottages, with flower-gar-

dens in front, where he had gone with Julia to see Edith; and while stopping by the nearest gate, and looking about on both sides, to see if there was anything he remembered — or in the midst of such intolerable sameness and prettiness anything, whatever, whereby the cottage of Mrs. Archibald might be distinguished from the others — he saw an aged man walk hurriedly toward the nearest, mount the steps — followed by a large dog, — apply the night-key, and enter as if on tiptoe. The next moment there was a loud, joyful bark — the ringing shout of a child — and the noise of trampling feet running hither and thither, and of welcoming voices, loud and happy, though not intelligible at the distance he stood. Nevertheless, he could not be mistaken. The voice of the dog he knew — the shout of the baby sounded familiar — and there, of course, dwelt the widow Archibald. But mystery of mysteries! What business had William Bayard there — and so much at home, as to be followed by Carlo, and to have a night-key? For William Bayard it was — though he mounted the steps with astonishing alertness, and vanished like a shadow.

How very strange, thought Arthur — go where I may — do what I will — I am constantly reminded of that mysterious man! It may be that the footsteps I have heard following me, night after night, as I have wandered through some of the vile and forbidden paths of this great Babylon, because I could not bear to stay at home, nor to go to bed early, — instead of being what I have hitherto supposed, the tramp of a watchman, stopping when I stopped, and following hard after me, tramp, tramp, tramp, with the ring of an iron-shod staff at intervals upon the pavement, may have been those of our guardian angel, this aged Quaker — this perambulating myth; — on my life, I should not be greatly astonished at any time, on turning my head, to find him at my elbow!

As he finished, he turned to go away, — and lo! — at his very elbow — there stood the apparition of William Bayard; for a moment he was all at sea, and stood stock-still with astonishment. If this man — this aged Quaker — was indeed William Bayard himself, and no spirit, — then who was the other William Bayard he had just seen hurrying up the gravel walk,

mounting the steps, and entering the cottage, followed by Carlo? Were the shadows he saw passing swiftly to and fro, by the large windows, and the noise of trampling feet, and the joyful cry of the child, and the yelping of the great watch-dog, only shadows? or had he taken leave of his senses?

"How's thee do to-day?" said the apparition, offering its hand.

Arthur felt strangely. He was no materialist, — was he, therefore, a spiritualist? Was he under any sort of delusion? Was the atmosphere about him charged, like a Leyden jar, with mesmeric, or other power? He hardly knew what to say, nor how to behave — though he durst not refuse the offered hand. Luckily for both, it was warm to the touch, — and he began to feel better.

"I saw thee coming this way, Arthur, and I hurried forward, thinking thee might want to see the widow Archibald, or my little friend Edith — or the baby — and I thought it best to prepare them; but when I saw thee stop and lean over the gate, and look about, as if thee didn't exactly know where thee was, and linger there in the way thee did, I felt sure thee had no message for them, and so I concluded not to mention that I had seen thee, but go out by another way, without being noticed, and come upon thee as I have — a little by surprise, I dare say. How's thy mother to-day? and thy uncle George?"

"Very well, I thank you ——"

"Ah — remember me to him, and say, if thee please, that I shall be with him, the Lord willing, on the day appointed. And that comely young woman, Julia, I hope she is well."

"Quite recovered, Sir; but when are you coming over to see for yourself? You are wanted, Sir!"

"Wanted!"

"That's the very word, Sir! My mother wants to see you, and so does Uncle George, and so does Julia."

"If I do not wholly misunderstand thee, Arthur Maynard, thee may tell thy dear mother, that I hope to see her within the next following month — peradventure sooner, but I dare not promise, for I have much to do before we meet, and much to say when we do meet; and she must not be hurried."

"You could not fix the day, Sir?"

"No, Arthur, — it is not in man to foresee what a day may bring forth; but if I am not self-deceived, she will be ready to acknowledge, when I do see her, that I have acted wisely in delaying. But I have a word for thee, my young friend. Thee will be wanted — set thy house in order — thee may be called for, when least expecting it ——"

"Nevertheless, my dear Sir, I hope to be prepared."

"Indeed!" — taking Arthur's hand between both of his, and gazing earnestly into his eyes, — "indeed! I was not speaking of death, but of that preparation we all need, for the proper discharge of our duties in life, one to another; but I see that prayer has been heard for the only son of his mother, and she a widow, and that by being prepared, thee meant more than I did — the Lord be praised!" And the old man lifted his calm, beautiful eyes to the habitation of his Father, and his lips moved, and a tear trembled upon his cheek, and his white hair shivered and blew about his face, like a halo.

"What I intended to say," added he, after a short pause, "and all I intended to say, was, that thee will be wanted for my purposes before long, and that I would prepare thee by saying — do not be out of the way. Thy voyage to South America need not interfere with what I have in view; but if it does — why, the voyage must be given up. Tell thy mother what I say, and be governed by her counsel."

Saying this, the venerable man disappeared; and so suddenly, that before Arthur had collected his thoughts, and got well under way, for his intended call upon the shipmaster, with whom the voyage was to be made, the very sound of his footstep, and the ring of his cane, as the iron ferule struck the pavement, had passed away.

He had mentioned the promise at the cottage, and all had been looking for him, day after day; but up to that on which he had been told to prepare for the morrow, and get ready to go with Julia, not a sign of his coming had appeared.

Meanwhile, Arthur had been studying the Scriptures for the first time in all his life, — not merely reading them, that his mind might be enriched and strengthened for the companionship

of orators and poets, and eloquent reasoners; but *studying* them, with inward prayer and great thankfulness of spirit, — he had been present, moreover, at the Fulton Street prayer-meetings, at the business-men's prayer-meeting in Broadway, and at others in the John Street Church, and at the Stuyvesant Institute, and once had been moved to breathe a word of prayer loud enough to be overheard by some of the strangers about him, — and yet, he was far from feeling satisfied with himself. He was expecting too much, perhaps, — like Naaman the leper, he was looking for a wonder, for some "great thing" to astonish his soul; and then, too, he had been told so much about the assurance that others felt, and so much about the brightness of their way, and the blessedness that had followed so instantaneously, that he began to be troubled, to have uncomfortable misgivings, and to fear that he had gone too fast, and too far; that he ought to have been less hopeful and more patient, and felt more anguish, and striven longer to save himself, — or, in other words, to make himself worthier. Delusions all! And yet the most of all to be feared, as the great Adversary well understands, or they would not be constantly employed against the lowly-hearted and self-distrustful. If to begin were to finish, and there were nothing more to be done, but fold our arms or lie down by the way-side, then it would be otherwise, and we should undergo no change, feel no discouragement.

Toward evening, on the very day before Julia was to appear against her uncle, as her aunt Elizabeth was sitting by herself in the back parlor, with the curtains down, and the pleasant afternoon sky of the season shimmering through the snowy drapery, and warming up, as with inward sunshine, the sumptuous folds of crimson cloth, a tremulous ring was heard at the door, and after a few words of inquiry, the girl entered, saying that an elderly gentleman, who never made use of a card, and would rather not give his name, wanted to see widow Elizabeth Maynard alone for half an hour.

"What kind of a looking man is he, Judith?"

"One of the handsomest looking old gentlemen I ever clapped eyes on, if you please, m'em; and with such a pleasant countenance, and such beautiful eyes, as clear as crystal, m'em, I

should say; not so very old, neither, m'em, if it wasn't for the white hair streaming away down over his shoulders, and a little stoop, as he stands leaning on his cane."

"That will do, Judith, I am satisfied," said Mrs. Maynard, feeling a little faint, and trying to prepare for the interview, by one look upward, — "Show him in."

After a few moments, a quick step was heard along the passage-way, and the ringing sound of a heavy cane, used with the decided energy of somebody altogether in earnest, and not so very old after all. The door opened — the girl withdrew — and there stood, face to face with the widowed mother, and the bereaved wife, the man she had most loved and most revered of all God's creatures in the morning of life, while the dew of youth was upon her. But oh, how changed! how unlike what he had been thirty years before, in the strength and glory of his towering manhood.

"Elizabeth," said he, — coming forward with a look of untroubled serenity, and offering both hands, — "I have long wanted to see thee, face to face, and alone! Year after year have I been hoping and believing that Providence would bring us together once more, in some such way; and though I have been very near to thee at times, near enough to hear thy well-remembered voice, I have been so unwilling to disturb thee, or to put myself in thy way, so changed as I knew thee would find me, that I have waited patiently and hopefully for the hour which has now arrived; — and I thank our heavenly Father, my dear friend, that, after all thy sorrows and trials, I find thee so little changed in appearance, and looking in such good health."

Mrs. Maynard took both hands, as they were offered; and leading him to a chair — and making a sign for him to be seated, for her heart was too full for speech — placed herself by his side, still retaining one hand, while she turned away her face, and wept in silence.

"I am afraid thee finds me very much altered, Elizabeth, — but, perhaps, if thee had seen me, as I have thee, many times every year, since our last interview, thee might not have been so shocked."

A gentle pressure of the hand — followed by a faint hysterical sob — was the only reply.

"I did not intend to refer to the past; — but as my object now is to prepare thee for the future, and especially for the morrow, — 'for we know not what a day may bring forth,' nor how soon I may be wanted elsewhere, — thee understands me, I hope, — I have desired 'to set my house in order,' not knowing how soon I may be called away. Rather distressing symptoms have returned within the last month; and it appears to me sometimes, that I am only spared for the help of thy dear brother, and for the vindication of thy most worthy husband, in the coming trial."

"For the vindication of my husband! how so? What has happened, I pray you, Mr. Bayard?"

"Elizabeth!"

"Well, my dear friend, what would you with me?"

"If thee wouldn't break my heart, Elizabeth — call me William."

"Well, then — William — you say that you desire, not only to save my poor brother, but to *vindicate* my husband! Pray tell me what I am to understand by this? Can it be, my dear friend, that my poor husband ever had anything to do with this terrible business, or that we are any way involved in it?"

"Thee shall know hereafter, Elizabeth. I am bound to secrecy for a while; — after thy brother is set free, I hope to show that neither he, nor my friend Harper, was ever at all blameworthy in the business, however much appearances may be against both."

Mrs. Maynard trembled from head to foot, and her strength departed, and she was like a little child; and her heart died away within her, as she murmured, —

"I desire to know the worst, William Bayard, — to be prepared for the worst; and if there be anything, whatever, which would be likely, if it came upon me by surprise, to disturb the tranquillity of mind I now enjoy, in the midst of all our tribulations, in mercy, let me know it!"

"I dare not, Elizabeth. My word is pledged. But thus much I can say, and will say, — thee has nothing to fear, if the whole truth comes out; nothing for thy brother, nor for thy late hus-

band; but we are beset by crafty adversaries, and thy poor brother is completely enmeshed. Nay, nay, do not look so frightened, I beseech thee, or my own courage may fail, when I most need a treble portion. Put thy trust in God. Happen what may, thee has much to be thankful for."

"By the tone of your voice, my friend — by the very language you employ — by your saying what I acknowledge on my knees to be true, every day of my life, and almost every hour of the day, that we have much to be thankful for, I see — I feel — I am sure — that we have been too hopeful; and that you are troubled for me, and for my poor brother."

"Somewhat, I acknowledge; but if the worst come to the worst, I tell thee now — and here — that I have in my possession all the proof that can be required for the vindication of thy brother; and that I have withheld it, from the first, only that I might have other proof, so that no imputation should rest upon the departed."

"My poor husband, I suppose?"

"Question me no further, I pray thee; but come prepared to answer such questions to-morrow, as Winthrop Fay may have occasion to ask thee, at my instigation."

"What are they? Could you not give me some idea of their nature, that I may have time for meditation and prayer. I tremble at the very thought of being questioned in public, without preparation."

"Let not thy heart be troubled, my dear friend. Thee will not be questioned in public. I may have occasion to show thee such a parcel as I have here, — look!" — and he drew forth from an inside pocket a sealed package, directed to 'William Bayard, Esquire, Phila., United States, North America,' — "and I may be obliged to open it in thy presence, and to ask thee if thee is acquainted with the handwriting."

"Why! it is the handwriting of my husband! How long have you had it? — and why has it not been opened?"

"I have had it over eight months; — and it was not to be opened, as thee may see by the writing here, till after the death of the writer."

"Do you know when it was written?"

"Nearly two years ago, I believe."

"Do you know what the bundle contains?"

"No — but I can guess."

"Well, and what do you guess it contains?"

"That question, dear Elizabeth, I cannot answer to-day; but look at me! Thee knows me, and thee knows whether I should be likely, after all that has happened between us, to withhold anything from thee, which I had a right to communicate, and which would be likely to help thy brother, or to make thee happier."

"You are right, my dear friend — forgive me — but I am very weak and fearful just now; the dismal weather we have had so much of, may have something to do with my apprehensiveness; — but, I am so glad to see you again — and looking so well."

"Elizabeth Maynard!"

"I mean just what I say. You are indeed looking well; for the expression of inward joy — of a mind at ease, notwithstanding your very white hair, and the stoop I observed as you entered — has not only overspread your countenance, but filled your eyes with brightness, and given a cheerful vibration to the sound of your voice, which reminds me of other days."

"Of other days, Elizabeth? I had hoped that all our other days were forgotten; and that henceforth and forever, we should meet as brother and sister in Christ. Where is Arthur?"

Startled by the abruptness of the question, she did not immediately answer.

"I understand that he has taken to the Bible; and I have reason to believe that his lips have been opened in prayer."

"Yes."

"But in public, I mean."

"The Lord be praised! But can it be true?"

"I think so — though I have not heard him myself; but I have not a few friends who are on the watch for new cases; and judging by the description I have had, I think thy dear son Arthur so far forgot himself at a prayer-meeting, two or three weeks ago, as to breathe aloud what he meant for secret prayer. But he was overheard ——"

"By God's holy angels, I hope!"

"Even so, Elizabeth, — and also by mortal men, who were ready to rejoice with the holy angels; and one of the brethren followed him, after he left the meeting, as far as the Upper Ferry, for the purpose of satisfying himself; but lost him there in the crowd. Judging by what I was told of his appearance and behavior, and age, I have no doubt, I assure thee, of its being Arthur."

"How shall I thank you, my dear friend, for your faithfulness to my poor boy?"

"Thee need not thank me, Elizabeth. I am all the happier, and it may be all the better, for being about my Father's business. I am now an old man."

"Oh, no — not an old man, William!"

"Perhaps not, if we reckon by years; but as we are only allowed so many pulsations of the heart, whether we outlive our three score and ten, or die earlier; as they are counted to us, one by one, have we not good reason to believe that, if they are hurried, our lives are shortened; and that, where a strong man has to go through with many a sore and ever-changing uncommon trial, he may be old in spirit, as in body, long before the appointed hour common to others. When thee first knew me, Elizabeth, I had no acquaintance with sorrow. I had never been hurried nor troubled. My life was like a river. I had no fear of calamity — no thought of death; and I was full of hope and trust."

Aunt Elizabeth withdrew her hand, as if to wipe away a tear; but it soon found its way back, they never knew how.

"Thy husband and I, notwithstanding the difference in our tempers and ages, were like David and Jonathan. We loved one another, I verily believe, with a love passing the love of women. But, while we were walking together in the sunshine — fearing no evil — the thunder broke over our heads, and the earth opened underneath our feet, and I was swallowed up in the darkness, and he alone escaped. Be not frightened, I beseech thee! Do not shudder and tremble at the touch of my hand. Thee has nothing to fear. I am not beside myself, nor growing wild, I assure thee."

"Oh, I am not afraid, William, — if I tremble, it is with grief, and sorrow, and shame, that so noble a creature should have been so frightfully shipwrecked, through any fault of mine."

"What do thee mean, Elizabeth Maynard? Whose fault was it, I pray, if, when I had been brought to a knowledge of the truth, so as to see for myself that I was not only walking on the outermost verge of a precipice, overhanging the shadows of another world, but that I was leading thee there, step by step, in my blindness? — whose fault was it, I say, that I lost my balance in the suddenness of the revelation, and in letting thee go, lost my only stay on earth, and toppled over headlong into the abyss? To thee, my dearest friend, am I indebted for that knowledge of what most concerned us both; which, while it shortens my life here, will, I trust, lengthen it hereafter."

Aunt Elizabeth was a little frightened, it must be acknowledged, notwithstanding her disclaimers, and there were times when her heart beat thick and hurriedly, and her color came and went, and her tears fell upon the hand she held, like summer rain, but there was no wildness of look or manner, no want of self-command; nothing, after all, but a deep seriousness, and a flow of language, wholly unlike what she had been accustomed to for years.

"Do not misunderstand me, I pray thee. Next to our heavenly Father, am I under the greatest obligations to thee, for helping me to look into my own heart, as thee did, — for revealing me to myself. Oh, Elizabeth, Elizabeth! if thee knew how long and how terrible was the darkness that followed thy unexpected marriage — a marriage I had hoped for and wished for, — though not so soon perhaps, — thee would not wonder to find me an old man, with white hair, stooping, and trembling, and tottering on my way toward the grave. And yet, I do not blame thee — I never did blame thee. Harper was worthy of thy holiest earthly affections, — he was a man after my own heart, when both were but worldlings; and the very man I would have chosen for a beloved sister, — nay, even for thee, dear Elizabeth, had it been left with me to decide. But when I tell thee, that, for long years, while wandering over Europe and Asia, and seeking rest, but finding none, the sorrowful remembrance of our last meeting

haunted me for ever and ever — thee will understand me. In the watches of the night, I saw thee pale and weeping — I heard thy broken cries of anguish and terror, and the faint, low sobbing, that drove me from the house out into the cold night air, and at last over sea."

"Oh, my friend, my poor friend, what shall I say!"

"Nothing, Elizabeth. Nothing more can be said now; the seal of death is upon my forehead, the hand of death upon my heart. Bear with me for a few moments, and I shall be through with all I have wanted to say. For many a year, I was unable to eat or sleep, I was filled with such dismal forebodings; and lest the friends who watched over me might be troubled, I would feign sleep, and lie still, hour after hour, till I was almost ready to spring from the bed, or sofa, and throw myself out of the window, in my unappeasable restlessness; and I would often swallow my food at the risk of choking, and without the least relish for it — or the least inclination — and when I could not distinguish one kind from another — and with an air of cheerfulness, too, which satisfied them, till they saw how emaciated I grew, and how querulous and peevish. At last, I determined to follow thee to England; — I did so — and that saved me, for I have never lost sight of thee since."

"Never lost sight of me!"

"*Never!* At this moment, I am as well acquainted with all that has happened to thee and to thy household, from the day I first met my friend Harper in the neighborhood, as if I had been living under the same roof with thee."

"Did he know this?"

"No, — not altogether. He knew that I often saw thee, and often heard thy voice; but many times he believed me to be afar off, in other lands, when I was within two minutes' walk of the street you lived in."

"And why did you not see me? You would have been always most welcome, I assure you."

"So he said; but I knew better — I knew it must be otherwise — and therefore I insisted upon keeping out of thy way, and not allowing thee to know that I was in the land of the living."

"How very strange! How mysterious, indeed! I now begin to recall a number of incidents, which I might have known at the time, had I not been misled in some way, so that my attention was diverted — and which, I now see, must have had some connection with you."

"I dare say. He mentioned several to me, and we were sometimes not a little amused at the narrow escapes I have had. More than once I have met thee coming in, or going out of thy house in the evening."

"Indeed!"

"And once, I was kept a prisoner by thy husband in the next chamber to thee, till near morning. It was the last time, however. I determined to run that risk no more. Do thee remember when little Arthur was brought home to thee one day, after he had tumbled into the basin, where he had been feeding the swans? I was watching him at the time, and took him out; and was in the carriage with him and the nurse, when it stopped at thy door."

"Is it possible! You, my noble-hearted, generous friend, watching over me for years, and over my husband, and saving him — as he himself acknowledged to me over and over again, with tears in his eyes — from a shipwreck worse than death — and even from death itself, if I rightly understood him, on one occasion; and I, never to know a word of all this, that I might acknowledge your brotherly kindness, and minister to you in turn."

"'Thou couldst not minister to a mind diseased, — pluck from the memory a rooted sorrow,' Elizabeth, or 'with some sweet oblivious antidote' — I forget the rest, — but I was afraid to see thee, — and thee must forgive me for quoting Shakspeare."

"I remember, too, that something very strange happened at the time of our greatest trouble; — and then it was that I first heard of your being alive, and that, by your timely interference, you had saved the house of Maynard & Co. from reproach and ruin."

"What was it, pray?"

"There was a ring — do you remember a large ring of twisted serpents, with carbuncle eyes, which my husband wore?"

"Yes, and thy brother wears it now, though he tries to con-

ceal it, I see, as if it were something to be afraid of — or ashamed of."

"It *is* something to be afraid of. In some way or other, I know not how — for he never explained the mystery — but this I know, that my husband owed his life to that ring. After the bitterness of death had passed, and he had begun to recover from the terrible prostration that followed your timely interference, that ring was put away; and I never saw it again till he sent it to brother George from his death-bed, begging of him never to part with it while he lived, and always to wear it, if he could. But your eyes are fixed upon me with a look I do not understand — it makes me tremble — pray don't! — you scare me — my very blood runs cold!"

"I was waiting to hear in what way that ring was connected with me in thy remembrance?"

"Well, — after the terrible night which followed the discovery that Maynard & Co. were bankrupt beyond all hope, — he handed me that ring, and begged me to put it away where it would be safe, and where he should never see it again; saying at the same time that you had appeared for his relief, just when there seemed to be no hope — no possibility of escape — and that this ring — though I never understood how — was in some way coupled with your appearance; in fact, I well remember that he called it a talisman, and assured me, half seriously, too, that it had once belonged to some great Eastern monarch."

"Solomon, perhaps?"

"No, not Solomon; but to somebody of our day, whose name I do not now remember."

"Was it Aladdin, Elizabeth, — or Tippoo Saib?"

"It was Tippoo Saib; I remember it well now — can you clear up the mystery?"

"Yes; but hereafter, not now. All that he told thee was true. That ring did save thy dear husband's life; — but I must go now; farewell."

"Won't you stay to dinner, and take a bed with us? We shall have no company, unless our friend Fay should drop in; but Julia, and Arthur, and my brother George, all want to see you, and all want to know you; do stop, will you?"

"Not to-day, Elizabeth. Farewell!"

"Farewell, my dear old friend."

And the next moment, William Bayard was gone, — moving off like a man of thirty-five, at the most, as he hurried along the piazza, and over the smooth gravel-walk, with his long, white hair blowing backward in the wind, and his gold-headed cane ringing like a light hammer upon the hard gravel.

CHAPTER XVIII.

On the morrow, after much prayer, and a long, sleepless night, Major Pendleton, Mrs. Maynard, Julia, and Arthur went away together in a carriage, on their sorrowful errand to New York. They rode in silence — like strangers at a funeral. When they alighted, Mr. Fay appeared at the door, as if waiting for them, and making a sign to the Major, who instantly withdrew, led them to a large antechamber crowded with witnesses about to go before the grand jury.

"Compose yourself, I pray, Miss Julia," said he, "confine yourself to the questions propounded, as you did in your first interview with me, and you have nothing to fear. Mr. Officer — this way, if you please. When you hear the name of Miss Parry, Julia Parry, you will find her waiting here."

"Aunt Elizabeth will go with me, I suppose?"

"No ——"

"Or Cousin Arthur?"

"No, not even Cousin Arthur. He may not be wanted, — nor your aunt Elizabeth; and if wanted, you will not go together, but separately, and be questioned separately."

"But you will be there, Mr. Fay?"

"No, my dear young friend. You must go alone — you must depend altogether upon yourself."

Julia turned very pale, and a tear gathered on her lashes; but instantly recollecting herself, and interchanging a patient smile with her aunt, and a look of cheerful trust with her cousin, she signified, that whenever called for, they would find her prepared.

Mr. Fay looked at the generous girl, with such evident admiration as to bring the color to her cheek — and then hurried

away, as if a great pressure had been lifted from his heart; and Arthur drew a chair somewhat nearer to Julia than he had ventured to do for a long while; and taking his mother's hand, sat in silence, watching the procedure, and studying the countenances about him.

There were two or three cases of murder, and many others of a highly aggravated character, about undergoing investigation. And as he looked around upon the witnesses, he shuddered; for upon the foreheads of not a few, he read, as if written with fire, the death-warrant of more than one fellow-creature. The sluggishness, the brutal indifference, and the squalor about him, all which he tried to conceal from his mother and Julia, by changing the chairs and calling off their attention to pleasanter faces, filled him with abhorrence and loathing. He felt, indeed, that, with such witnesses, whether for or against him, in a case of life and death, no man was safe; and when he thought of his poor uncle, and of the serious questions involved, his heart died away within him, and his hand shook, as it rested on the arm of Julia's chair.

She saw it, and was troubled. Their eyes met, and Arthur's heart yearned for that interchange of sympathy which they had been so long familiar with; and before he knew it, his hand had slipped from the chair and fallen upon hers — trembling, and cold as death. Julia started and shivered at the touch; but she did not withdraw her hand; nor when she saw the eyes of her aunt Elizabeth following hers, did she manifest any embarrassment, or uneasiness. But she breathed hurriedly — her color came and went — a crowd of tumultuous thoughts rushed through her brain — her eyes filled — and she turned away without speaking a word.

"Dear Julia," whispered Arthur, — "don't be discouraged, — let us be of good cheer! Our faith may be sorely tried, and the issue may not be so near as we have hoped, nor altogether what we have expected; but I have great confidence in the opinion of Mr. Fay ——"

The little hand was half withdrawn.

"Still more, in the assurance we have had from Uncle George himself, whatever may be thought by others."

A slight heaving of the shoulders and a faint, convulsive sob from Julia, brought her aunt Elizabeth to her side. But the little hand was left still nestling in that of Cousin Arthur, and, though the deep silence continued unbroken, the old current of sympathy was fast finding its way back through the dried-up channels of a past friendship, and these two children were beginning to understand each other once more, without the help of language, when the door opened and Mr. Bayard looked in upon them for a moment, and then disappeared.

"Did you observe the expression of his eyes, dear mother? I am sure something hopeful has happened," said Arthur, "and since the interview he had with you, last evening, I am sure that you have reason for encouragement. Judging by what you have communicated to me, I am strong in that faith, which I hope may be acceptable to our heavenly Father."

A slight pressure from Julia's hand, which was instantly caught away, as if she was afraid to trust it longer there, brought the color to Arthur's temples.

"It is not an impatient faith, I hope," said his mother.

At this moment, the door opened softly, and the officer appeared, followed on tiptoe a few steps by Mr. Bayard; and the name of Miss Julia Parry was uttered in a low, considerate voice, — not *called*, so as to attract the attention of other witnesses.

Julia dropped her veil, and rose at the officer's approach; and when Arthur took her hand to draw it under his arm, though it struck a chill to his very heart, there was no trembling, and no faltering; and, when he left her at the door of the grand jury room, and whispered to her — "God bless you, my dear cousin! God strengthen you!" she lifted her veil, and turning toward him, with a look of such holy determination, though her eyes were swimming, whispered, "pray for me!" that Arthur would have knelt to her, if they had been alone.

Julia had been well prepared by Mr. Fay, as he thought, and she thought; and having, for many a month, "possessed her soul in patience," had little to fear from surprise; but still, when she found herself alone — altogether alone — in the presence of eighteen or twenty silent, middle-aged, bearded men, looking very serious — and perhaps a little anxious — all seated round

a large, long table, with pens and paper spread out before them, and another sharp, hard-looking personage, with corrugated brow, stiff hair, just beginning to be flecked with the moonlight of coming age, and small, keen, restless eyes, which were always averted, when he found you trying to read them, and always fixed upon the party questioned, with a burning intensity, alike troublesome and exasperating — she could not help feeling as if she herself were on trial.

This gentleman, who sat near the head of the table, with a large pile of newspapers and other documents before him, was the chief questioner, though most of the others had sometimes a word to say, or a suggestion to make, as the examination proceeded.

After allowing a sufficient time for Julia to recollect herself, and look about her, the foreman begged her to lift her veil.

Julia bowed.

And after fidgeting in his chair awhile, and whispering to his nearest neighbor, the gentleman above-described, who turned out to be the prosecutor himself, and who had been specially invited by the grand jury to be present, contrary to the usual practice, and to take charge of the examination, begged the witness to give her name.

"Julia Parry, Sir," she answered, in a low, sweet, clear voice, which evidently produced a pleasant impression.

"You are related to Mr. Pendleton, I believe — George A. Pendleton?" — looking at a list of names on a paper lying before him.

"He is my uncle, Sir."

"On the side of your mother, I presume? Her name was Pendleton, I believe?"

"It was."

"Have you any recollection, Miss Parry, of this paper?" handing her an open letter.

"I have."

"Are you acquainted with the handwriting?"

"I am."

"Whose handwriting is it?"

"Mine, Sir."

"Will you please run your eye over it, and see if any alterations or additions have been made to it, since you saw it last?"

"I do not find any, Sir."

"When did you see it last?"

"When I sealed it for the post-office, immediately after finishing it. The date will show."

"To whom did you intrust it for the office?"

"To a waiter belonging to the St. Nicholas, I believe."

"Do you happen to recollect his name?"

"Peter — I do not remember his other name."

"I'll trouble you," reaching his hand for the letter. "You speak here of enclosures, I see. Was there anything enclosed?"

"There was."

"And what, if you please?"

"Four Bank of England notes."

"Do you remember the whole amount? or the denominations?"

"Altogether, about a hundred pounds, I believe; there was one fifty, and one or two twenties."

"Can you recall the numbers or dates?"

"No, Sir."

"Have you any means of ascertaining the numbers or dates?"

"No, Sir."

"Did you make any memorandum at the time, or afterward?"

"No, Sir."

"Should you know them again, if you saw them?"

"I think I should, Sir."

'Are these the notes?"

"I should say they were, judging by appearances, but I am not sure."

"To whom was the letter directed?"

"To my brother Charles. You will find the address on the outside of the letter itself."

"And why were they sent to your brother Charles?"

For the first time, Julia faltered; a glow of indignation flushed her face, and her wet lashes trembled with inward brightness; but she answered, nevertheless, and calmly too, with the same low, sweet, mournful voice.

"My brother was going away, I knew not whither; but among strangers, I believed, and I wanted to help him, so far as it lay in my power."

"But how was your letter to reach him, if you knew not whither he was gone?"

"Our letters were to pass through the hands of a third person for a while, and afterwards to remain till called for, in the post-offices mentioned."

There was a slight curl of the upper lip, as she answered the last question, and something portentous in the look she turned upon the prosecutor, but no quavering nor faltering.

"Could you furnish us with the name of that person, and with a list of the post-offices?"

"I might do so, if allowed to go home for a paper I have in my portfolio."

"Did your brother Charles ever acknowledge the receipt of the letter, or bank-notes?"

"How could he, Sir, when both were intercepted?"

For the first time, Julia was thrown off her guard, and forgot her past experience, and fixed resolution; but she instantly recovered herself, and the examination was renewed, and her answers were carefully noted, and oftentimes at full length, by some of the jury.

"How do you know they were *intercepted*, Miss Parry?"

"Because I find them here, in the possession of strangers; and because I have heard from my brother since, and they had never reached him?"

"How can you know that, Miss Parry?"

"Because he wrote and cautioned me not to use them; and I take it for granted that he would have acknowledged the receipt, if they had ever come to hand, or destroyed them, perhaps, or he might have returned them to me."

"But why destroy them?"

"Because they were said to be worthless, and perhaps were forged; and his earnest desire that I should not make use of them, satisfied me that he well understood their true character."

"He was alarmed on *your* account, you believe — unwilling to have you exposed — hey?"

"Sir!"

"Involved, I mean. Do you know if he manifested at any time, in any way, any correspondent uneasiness about others — your uncle George, for instance, or your aunt Maynard?"

"Not with regard to my aunt; but in a letter I have somewhere, and perhaps in that which I have already mentioned, there was something said by him about Uncle George, which satisfied me at the time, that he felt anxious about him also."

"Could you produce that letter?"

"Yes; I think I have it among my brother's letters."

"And now, Miss Parry," straightening himself up — adjusting his spectacles, and glancing from face to face, up and down both sides of the long table, very slowly, and with a look not to be misunderstood — "allow me to ask you — and I do it with all respect, I assure you, but my duty obliges me to do it for the satisfaction of these gentlemen, otherwise I should not — allow me to ask if you ever had any reason for questioning the goodness of these notes — their genuineness, their validity, I mean — before you sent them off to your brother? Take time for consideration, I pray you."

"No time for consideration is required, Sir. I never did."

"Have you got the lady's answer, gentlemen?" said the prosecutor, with a look that displeased Julia, and led her to question Mr. Fay after she was through; and she was not a little vexed and astonished, to find that she had been dealt with by the prosecutor, as an adverse witness — a witness, that is, favorably disposed toward the party charged — and had been cross-questioned accordingly.

The answer being down, and all eyes turned upon her, the prosecutor continued — a smile of bitterness and pique and triumph playing round his mouth, as if about to feed some ancient grudge, professional or otherwise — and for a single moment Julia's courage gave way.

"Recollect yourself, Miss Parry, before you answer my next question. Are you fully prepared?"

Julia bowed — somewhat scornfully, it must be acknowledged.

"Was not one of these very notes" — glancing at the jury

with a triumphant smile — "or one of the same kind, refused one evening at the bar, soon after you went to the St. Nicholas?"

Instead of being overwhelmed — thunderstruck and aghast — as the learned gentleman expected, by the suddenness and strangeness of the question, Julia answered instantly, and without a sign of perturbation —

"I believe so. Something of the kind happened at the St. Nicholas, very soon after we went there; and though I am not sure, I have no reason to doubt, Sir, that one of these very notes, or one of the same kind, for I had several in my possession, was refused by somebody, and perhaps at the bar, and returned to me."

"And why was it refused, pray?"

"I do not know, Sir."

"Did you never inquire?"

"No, Sir."

"Did you form any opinion at the time?"

"No, Sir."

"Did it give you any uneasiness?"

"Not the least in the world, Sir. I should never have thought of it again, perhaps, had not my attention been called to it."

"Was it not a little strange, to have a bank-note refused, and returned to a lady boarder, in a house of such high character?"

Julia was not to be intimidated. She felt that she was no longer a witness, but a wronged woman, with nobody at hand to take her part; and that, while treated with a great appearance of respect and courtesy, the gentleman was trying to show himself off, at her expense; and the blood flashed through her veins like fire, as she answered very slowly, but with a musical vibration that showed the deep inward working of a chafed spirit. In a word, her woman's rights being outraged, and her sex, in her, she determined to vindicate herself.

"To me, Sir, as I have said before, it was not strange; and certainly not *very* strange, or I should have remembered it. I was a boarder, Sir — we were all boarding there together — and if the note had been *suspicious* in my estimation, I should not have been very likely to send it to the bar to be changed. Bank of

England notes are not very common here, I am told — not in circulation, certainly — and at the time this note was returned to me, all the banks of your city were failing, and most of them, if not all, had stopped paying specie. When I asked for gold, in exchange for a Bank of England note, in the midst of such a panic, it was without a moment's consideration, as I should have done it over sea; and therefore it was that I felt no surprise and no uneasiness, I assure you, Sir, after I came to consider the matter."

The gentleman bowed; but with a changed expression. The look of inward triumph was gone forever; and he found little or no comfort in the eyes about him — all of which were rivetted upon Julia, with an expression, far from being agreeable to her interrogator.

"And now," continued he, after a dreary pause — taking off and putting on his spectacles two or three times, and wiping them over and over again, with the inside of his glove, and rummaging nervously among his papers — "And now, will you be so obliging, Miss Parry, as to look at these," — handing her the burnt fragments of several notes, which appeared to have been twisted together, and used for lighting a cigar — "and tell me, if you have any recollection of having seen them before?"

After a thorough examination, Julia handed them across the table to the foreman, who reached for them, and answering deliberately and clearly, said "*No, Sir.*"

The learned gentleman had evidently mistaken his cue.

"Do you answer *no*, Miss Parry?"

"Certainly I do, Sir."

What was to be done? The gentleman had reserved this, and the other questions growing out of it, for clenching the whole business; but instead of springing a mine for Mr. Fay, or the Major, or Julia, he had only contrived to blow himself up.

After consulting with the foreman in a whisper, and shaking his head this way and that, several times, and then up and down, about as many more — feeling his chin at long intervals, and running his fingers through his hair, and pursing out his mouth, and rolling up his eyes to the ceiling, an idea appeared to strike him all at once — a throe followed — a long breath — and turn-

ing toward Julia, wi' a greatly changed manner, he begged leave to ask, "if sh' erself had ever destroyed any such notes by fire or otherwi '

"Never!" was the reply.

"Do you happen to know of anybody else having done so?"

"Yes."

"Ah, indeed! — oh! — ah!" — rubbing his hands with all his might, like a family physician coming in from the cold, and about to feel the pulse of a delicate woman — "and who was the person, pray, — and when, and where, — and why was it done, hey?"

"I may not be able to answer all your questions at once, but I will do my best," said Julia, with a smile the prosecutor didn't much like, though most of his grave-looking associates did. "I saw my uncle George ——"

"The Major, you mean — George A. Pendleton — your uncle George," said the prosecutor, with somewhat of unbecoming eagerness and impatience, — "the gentleman who stands charged with the offence we are now investigating, hey?"

Julia bowed.

"I saw my uncle George destroy several Bank of England notes, one evening, by fire. I cannot fix the time; but the newspapers of the following day contain references to the fragments that were carried up chimney, and found near the Metropolitan Hotel, I believe. It was at the St. Nicholas — in my uncle's private parlor, — late in the evening. They were burned because, he said, they were worthless."

"Did he tell you how he came by them?"

"No, Sir."

"Have you any knowledge on the subject, Miss Parry?"

"Yes, Sir, — all that may be necessary, perhaps. My uncle had the notes he destroyed — or attempted to destroy — for it seems they were not entirely consumed — *from me.*"

The prosecutor started up from his chair.

"From you! Miss Parry?"

"From me, Sir."

"And where did you get them? How came you by them, pray?"

"My uncle George gave them to me, on leaving England for America. He is my guardian, and is careful to keep me supplied with pocket-money, to the whole amount of my yearly allowance."

"The mystery thickens, gentlemen. If you can understand it, I must acknowledge it is more than I can do. First, we have the party charged furnishing the witness with forged notes for pocket-money; then, after months have gone by, withdrawing them, and burning them before her face, and acknowledging them to be spurious."

"No, Sir — excuse me — acknowledging them to be *worthless*."

"Well, I confess, gentlemen, I cannot understand the witness."

"Nothing can be clearer, Sir," retorted Julia, with perfect self-possession — "at least, to my understanding. When he gave the bank-notes in question, I suppose he had no more doubt of their being what they purported to be, than if he had taken them out of the bank himself; and when he destroyed them, it was because he had just come to the knowledge, in some way — I know not how — that they were worthless; I do not say forged, nor spurious, for *he* did not say so — but *worthless*. For the same reason that he would not trust me with them, after he knew their real character, I take it for granted, Sir, that he would never have put them into my hands for use, if there had been the slightest ground of apprehension at the time."

Here several of the grand jury interchanged nods, and smiles, and winks, which the learned gentleman shut his eyes against, with uncommon emphasis; and after a few minutes more spent in idle questioning, such as you may hear any day in courts of justice, where people do not always know enough to hold their tongues, and are always asking impertinent questions, lest they may appear to be *nonplussed* — ignorant, or forgetful of the great leading principle that governs alike in chess, and whist, and in the examination of witnesses; and that is, never to make a move, nor to ask a question, without having a reason for it. Running for luck has emptied or addled the brains of many a sharp legal questioner. The foreman signified to the officer that they were done with the witness, and he might lead her off.

Julia rose, dropped her veil, and bowed; and the whole body of "potent, grave, and reverend seigniors," rose at the same instant — with the exception of the prosecutor, who just then happened to be looking for his spectacles, which had found their way up to the very roots of his hair — and bowed in reply, as no one of the whole had ever bowed before in all his life, to a witness.

Julia found Arthur waiting just outside of the door, looking very pale, and anxious, and worried, until he saw her coming forward, with a firm step, and a serene countenance. He caught her hand with a murmur of admiration, and but for the presence of strangers, would have carried it to his lips. Julia saw her aunt's eyes fixed upon her, and blushed crimson — of course.

The worst was now over. Neither Mrs. Maynard nor Arthur was called; and though Mr. Fay shook his head, when they reached the door, on finding how late it was, he did not appear much troubled. He was invited to a seat in the carriage, though there was no room inside, unless Arthur rode with the coachman; but he refused, saying he must be on hand early the next day, so that if the grand jury found a bill — as he knew they would — for they couldn't well do otherwise ——"

Arthur stared; but the words were uttered in such a pleasant chirping voice, very much as if it was just the thing to be desired, that he felt no further uneasiness.

"Why, then," continued Mr. Fay, "we must be ready with new bail, and a witness or two, and prepare for trial," — winking at Arthur, who did not quite understand him, though he winked in reply, just to encourage Julia and his mother.

On arriving at the cottage, after the fatigue and worry of the day, — it was like a burst of sunshine following the dismal, dreary weather of March or November. It was their home; — they were no longer unsheltered, nor altogether friendless, — and they felt, as they entered once more upon the hallowed stillness of that household sanctuary, as they had never felt before, and as if they never wanted to leave it again. They were silent and thoughtful, and longed to be sitting together once more — hand in hand, if it might be — as in the days that were past, and well-nigh forgotten, or, if not wholly forgotten, seldom or never adverted to, when there was no self-upbraiding in the way, and their untroubled,

though sometimes overburdened hearts, full to overflowing with sweet recollections and pleasant hopes, understood each other without the help of language, and felt the stillness within and about them, like a blessing.

Before they had time to throw off their shawls and bonnets, a carriage drove up, and out jumped the venerable Mr. Bayard, with a suddenness quite startling, followed by Miss Wentworth and Sallie Webb, whom he handed out with the stately self-possession and graceful ease of a man of the world, though without bowing, or in any way forgetting himself as a Friend.

To say that Mrs. Maynard was greatly astonished, that Julia seemed perplexed and troubled, and poor Arthur out of all patience with such indelicate, untimely obtrusiveness, would be only the simple truth — somewhat softened. To have strangers, or something worse, drop in upon you just when you are longing to throw yourself into the first easy-chair for a comfortable nap — to steal away by yourself — to do anything, or go anywhere, so that you may be altogether alone — is, to say the least of it, rather trying, and sometimes very uncomfortable and provoking.

"Mary Wentworth," said Mr. Bayard, — pointing to Aunt Elizabeth — "guess who that is?"

"We are already acquainted, Mr. Bayard; I have had the pleasure of meeting Miss Wentworth before," said Aunt Elizabeth, smiling at the oddity of the introduction.

"But still she does not know thee, Elizabeth, — nor thee, her; — I do wish thee would remember to call me William!"

"And I do wish, Cousin William, you would just be so obliging, before we go any farther, as to talk a little downright wholesome English," said Miss Wentworth; being prompted thereto by Sallie Webb, as they had reason to know, before the visit was ended.

"So thee hasn't quite overcome thy dislike for the plain language of thy youth, Cousin Mary. I hoped thee would have come to thy senses long before this, and that after trying the world for so many years, thee might see its emptiness, and steal back to the home of thy childhood once more — never to leave it again."

"Nonsense, I tell you! The language of my childhood was, even at the worst, good English; and certainly you would have been among the last of all the men, I know, when we were both young, to say *thee is*, instead of *thou art* — or *thee art* — as many do, who are always halting between two opinions — neither one thing nor another."

"Neither hawk nor buzzard," whispered Sallie, nudging her aunt's elbow at the same time, as if the whole had been preconcerted; and then there was a loud ringing laugh, sounding very much as if that also were premeditated.

"Well, Cousin Mary, I acknowledge that in our youth, some forty years ago or thereabouts, ——"

"Mercy on us! what will he say next?" whispered Sallie to Arthur, who stood nearest.

"I acknowledge that we were both in the habit of using the plain language in a different way, and according to the laws of English grammar, — though it was far from being palatable to thee, I remember, or why did thee give it up?"

"Provoking! I tell you, Cousin William, that if you persist in *thee*ing me — I have no objection to being *thou*'d — I shall be obliged to give you up, altogether."

"Of a truth, Cousin Mary?"

"Of a truth, Cousin William. You! a well educated man — why, I wonder you are not ashamed of yourself! — be quiet, Sallie, — haven't I done all I threatened to do?"

"That you have," said Sallie, to whom the last question was put, aside as it were, and over the left shoulder. "That you have, dear aunty — and something to spare, I acknowledge."

"Well, well, never mind, Mary. When we are together, if I can think of it, I will try to use the plain language as we did in our youth; for" — smiling, and taking her hand — "I wouldn't have my dear good cousin feel ashamed of me; and I couldn't bear to have thee give me up, *altogether*."

"Agreed! there's my hand on't!"

"Well, then. I was about saying, that, although my friend Elizabeth and thee — thou, I mean — thou see'st how awkward it is, at the best — have met before, I happen to know that you are not well acquainted."

"Not well acquainted, certainly; but ——"

"Nay, nay, — hear me through. Thou mayest remember hearing much of a young woman in our society, by the name of Elizabeth Pendleton."

"I do, indeed."

"Well, — she is now standing before thee."

"Can it be possible! And you, my dear madam, — you are that extraordinary girl," said Miss Wentworth, seizing her hands, — you the dear, generous, brave creature, who had the strength of mind to refuse a ——"

"Hush, aunty, hush!" whispered Sallie, with a glance at Julia and Arthur, and then at Mrs. Maynard; "you do not see how you are distressing them all."

"Don't be troubled, Sallie, — and do leave off that provoking habit of always interfering, I pray you."

"Yes, aunty."

"And don't call me aunty, — *if* you please."

"Agreed, as you say; but what must I call you?"

"You know well enough, minx, — and hereafter, if I can recollect myself, I won't answer you, if you don't call me Miss Marie; I am not a married woman — I am not a widow — and I am no mistress, though everybody delights in calling me Mrs. Wentworth; a plague on them, I say!"

"Poh, poh! Cousin Mary! don't be angry with her," said Mr. Bayard.

"But you know, aunty — Miss Marie —" continued her tormentor, coaxingly, "you know it is an English fashion to call maiden ladies mistress, after a certain age. Mrs. Hannah More, for example, and Mrs. Joanna Baillie."

This was really too much, and her aunt snapped out something in reply, which was not well understood by the others, although it sent Sallie to the window, with a handkerchief crammed into her mouth to stop the gurgling — not giggling. It was too deep, and too rich for that.

Julia was grieved, Arthur out of all patience, and Mrs. Maynard frightened, till happening to catch the eye of Mr. Bayard, she saw that he was not much moved, but on the contrary, rather amused, at the exhibition of character.

But while they were wondering what had brought these two unwelcome visitors down upon them so suddenly, Miss Wentworth, or Aunt Marie, if you will insist upon it, came forward a step or two, and taking Mrs. Maynard's hand once more, said to her, with a manner so changed, and with an expression so beautiful, as to make her wonder if she could be the same person, "I see, my dear madam, that you do not well understand my character, nor that of my troublesome niece there — the sauciest thing, and the most perverse you ever saw, at times — though well meaning, and rather kindly disposed, when she is allowed to have her own way. But we must be going, and as your brother is not here, I must leave a message with you. My cousin here — a very odd sort of a creature as you see, and for that matter, so are we all, I believe, judging by what other people say of us — may want some help to-morrow, for the Major — there! there! don't interfere, Sallie Webb — and I wish you to say to him, that I shall be glad to do anything in my power, — anything indeed — that may be required of me. I know what has happened to-day; — good-bye — not a word, I pray you." And off she hurried, followed by Sallie, curtsying and smiling at every dip, and keeping her eyes on Arthur, to the last.

Mr. Bayard was about to follow.

"Why not dine with us, and stay all night?" asked Mrs. Maynard.

After a little consideration, he answered, "yes; I want to see thy brother, and I must see him before I sleep."

Arthur helped the ladies into their carriage; and notwithstanding the whimsical behavior of the niece, could not help acknowledging that she was not only a very handsome, but a very showy girl, with a remarkably pretty foot, and high instep, and with an air of cool, saucy self-possession, almost unendurable. Imperious and arch, and rather hoydenish at times, yet there was a pleasant expression about her mouth, and something playful in her eyes, and a sort of chirp in her voice, when she was most provoking, which led Arthur to believe, that, after all, she was only playing a part — perhaps.

A long silence, and not a little embarrassment followed their departure.

"You must not judge of these two women, by their behavior to-day, Elizabeth," said Mr. Bayard, much to the surprise of Julia and Arthur, who were accustomed to hear her called Elizabeth by their uncle George, and by him only. "I do not wonder at thy surprise, nor should I much wonder, if they were both supposed to be women of evil temper, not only unhappy themselves, but determined to make everybody else unhappy. Yet nothing could be further from the truth."

Mrs. Maynard, Arthur and Julia looked at one another, and appeared somewhat incredulous.

"I am right, I assure you all. I have known Sallie — or Sarah, as we used to call her, till she got her beautiful Scripture name Frenchified — from her earliest childhood; and I know her to be generous, intelligent, and good-tempered; nay, capable of great sacrifices when they are needed, self-denying, and far from being wilful; but vain, frivolous, and fashionable. Of her aunt, I might say much more. She is what thee would call a superior woman — a noble-hearted woman — Elizabeth, and you will find her so. Be patient with her, and with Sarah. They are very odd — and so are most of the family." His voice trembled here, and he faltered for a moment; but just as he was about resuming the subject, the noise of a carriage was heard, — voices at the door — and after a few minutes, the Major entered, looking happier than he had for months.

"I must have a little talk with thee, friend George," said Mr. Bayard, "before thee goes to dinner, so that I may be able to get back to my lodgings to-night, and be prepared early to-morrow, — for Winthrop Fay tells me we have no time to lose, and I may be wanted to-morrow."

The Major's countenance fell; but they instantly withdrew, and had a long conference together; at the end of which, their guest, instead of stopping to take a bed with them, insisted on going away, without his dinner.

"It must be so," said he, in reply to their urgent solicitations, "I have much to do; I am expecting a friend, who may drop in upon me at any hour, and I must not be out of the way. Thy brother will satisfy thee, Elizabeth, after I have gone, that I had no choice. What I have heard from him, while we were together

just now, has obliged me to change a part of my plans, and I must see friend Fay before I sleep. Farewell."

"The most extraordinary man!" said the Major. "It seems to me sometimes that I must have known him before. The tones of his voice haunt me."

Arthur smiled, and went into a brief history of what had happened in the prayer-meeting, and elsewhere, during their early acquaintance.

"No, no, Arthur, — long before that," said Uncle George. "Sometimes I feel as if we had been acquainted in some other world, years and years ago."

It was no time for further explanations, or he would have known the truth, and the whole truth, perhaps, from his beloved sister; but the presence of others did not allow of such communications, and the opportunity went by.

There was a cloud over the spirits of all, that evening, up to the very last moment they were together; and when prayers were over, Julia withdrew, saying that she felt sleepy, and so utterly overcome with weariness, that she must leave them, — that she so longed for the stillness and repose of her little chamber, though she might not go to bed for a long while, and knew she would not be able to sleep if she did, that she felt herself growing unreasonable and peevish.

Arthur followed, and the Major was about going, when a look from his sister brought him to her side.

"You are troubled, my brother; has anything happened to make you uneasy? anything to change the views of Mr. Fay?"

"Nothing, dear Elizabeth; and I ought to be ashamed of myself, and sorely grieved for my unthankfulness; but the truth is, I am so changed, so unlike what I used to be, when others turned to me for consolation, that I should be wholly discouraged, were I not very sure that most of these unhappy fluctuations of temper are owing to impaired health. If I could but keep in mind the two rules I laid down for myself, when I first began to go abroad, I do not believe you would ever see anything of the fretfulness or impatience I sometimes betray; and though I might be serious and thoughtful — for how could I be otherwise with such a heavy cloud hanging over me, and always ready to burst? — I do not

believe I should look unhappy, or bring lowness of spirits upon you or the dear children, as I do now."

"What rules do you refer to, brother?"

"To these: — First, always to remember how much we have left to be thankful for, happen what may: and secondly, how much worse off multitudes about us always are — happen what may. Just look here, Elizabeth," — stooping and laying her hand upon his head, — "see how these things wear upon me."

"Heavens, brother!" she exclaimed, with astonishment. "I had no idea of this; I have read of such things, to be sure, and sometimes of the hair turning white in a single day, but I never quite believed in them, till now; and I very much wonder that we have not observed it before."

"I have tried to conceal it, Elizabeth, not only from you, but from myself, by brushing my hair the other way, and waiting month after month, for what I have been hoping for, a new growth. But never mind; — if the color was changed by fever, as I think it may have been, because much of it has come out since I have been able to go abroad — the new hair may be dark, instead of gray; but whether it be or not, I care very little, and I have only called your attention to it now, because I did not like the idea of your being taken by surprise ——"

"Do tell me what Miss Wentworth wanted of you," said Mrs. Maynard, as if unwilling to dwell upon so unpleasant a subject, as premature old age.

"I will, but you must keep what I say to yourself. It seems that one of my bail may be wanted for a witness, and when it was mentioned to her by Mr. Fay, the generous creature, who, by the way, appears to be a woman of large unincumbered property, begged of him to see you, or me, and offer any help that might be needed. In fact, Elizabeth, she went so far as to offer a bond of indemnity to any person Mr. Fay might find willing to be my bail — or even to become bail herself."

"And this is the woman we have been laughing about, and trying to avoid for the last three months!"

"Even so. We have wholly misunderstood her character, Elizabeth, and might never have known her, as we now do, but for Mr. Bayard."

"But where is he? Why couldn't he furnish bail? I have heard he is very wealthy."

"He will do so; but as he is the very person whom we are likely to want for a witness, and will go into court and surrender me, if the grand jury find a true bill, it would not do for him to furnish other bail — you understand?"

"No, indeed, not I! Nor do I care to understand these things. If Mr. Fay and you are satisfied, I have nothing to say; only, in mercy, dear brother, let us be more upon our guard, I pray you, against rash conclusions to the disadvantage of others, however much appearances may be against them."

"Right, Elizabeth! Judge not, lest ye also be judged, — and surely we have good reason for obeying. Few have suffered more — and few have more need of charity. Good-night."

"Good-night, brother."

CHAPTER XIX.

On the following Saturday, the grand jury returned a true bill, and the previous arrangements having been completed, and new bail furnished, the "prisoner at the bar," as the prosecutor persisted in calling him, with great emphasis and something of spite, was forthwith arraigned.

"George A. Pendleton, stand up!" said the imperious clerk.

The Major stood up — calm and self-assured, though rather pale.

"Hearken to an indictment found against you by the grand jury," &c. &c. &c.

"Silence there! silence!" cried the sheriff.

And then the indictment, which was what lawyers would call rather lengthy, being varied in about half a dozen different ways to meet every supposable case, and alleging substantially very different offences, and rather hard to be dealt with, under the revised statutes of New York, was read slowly and deliberately, — the prosecutor eyeing the judge a little sideways, and taking snuff at him, pinch after pinch, with a very significant air, as if they were soon to have their hands full, and then glancing, first at one jury-box, and then at the other, and adjusting his spectacles at the foreman of each, for a dead shot, to begin with, before the skirmishers were thrown forward, or the main body brought up.

At last the clerk finished, and folding the paper, as he spoke, he called out with a sharp creak in his voice, which attracted universal attention, and seemed especially meant for the accommodation of Mr. Attorney, the prosecutor, — "Prisoner at the bar!"

Mr. Fay smiled, — but his deep, clear eyes flashed fire.

"What say you to this indictment? guilty or not guilty?" continued the clerk, half dropping into a chair as he spoke.

"Not guilty."

"Are you ready for your trial?"

The prisoner stooped over to Mr. Fay, who sat leaning back in his chair, and playing with a bit of twisted paper fashioned like a lamplighter. While they were yet whispering together — Mr. Fay looking untroubled — and the prisoner a little flushed — and the clerk, who had come to his senses, and found his feet again, appeared to be growing a little impatient, notwithstanding the assurance he had received from Mr. Fay, that he should be able to answer in a few minutes, after a word or two with his client, a tall man was seen elbowing his way through the crowd, with his hat on, and pressing toward the parties in consultation, without regarding the officers in attendance, or the looks of the bar, as he pushed and hustled along up to the table.

It was William Bayard himself — with countenance heated and flushed, and eyes uncommonly bright.

Mr. Fay was somewhat startled; and when Mr. Bayard stooped and touched the prisoner on the elbow, and whispered so as to be overheard by the prosecutor himself, "Say thee's ready for trial, George!" he was not a little astonished, "say so, I tell thee, — don't keep the man waiting!"

"But, my dear Sir," said the Major, — "I am not ready for trial."

"Thee is, I tell thee, — say so, at once!"

"What are we to do, Mr. Fay?" asked the Major, "I cannot, of course, go to trial without my witnesses; and I do not like saying I am ready, when I am not."

"By Jove!" said Mr. Fay — who never came out plump with what might be called a downright Christian oath — "I am satisfied from that look of our venerable friend that you will be safe in following his advice."

"Be it so, Mr. Fay, — I do not well understand your reasons for changing the battle-ground, — but, if you say so, I am ready."

Mr. Bayard was delighted, and after another look into his glowing eyes, Mr. Fay nodded, and the Major turning toward the bench, said, — "We are ready for trial, your honor."

The prosecutor was evidently astonished and perplexed by the manœuvre.

A consultation followed, and after a few minutes, the case was set down for trial on the next Tuesday following. Mr. Fay and the Major preferred Monday morning, the first thing; but Mr. Attorney was not quite sure of all his witnesses, and the court left him, of course, to manage the case in his own way.

That something was to be feared from the alertness and promptitude of Mr. Fay, the prosecutor felt assured; but what it was, he could not possibly imagine. If a trap was to be sprung, the best way would be to refuse whatever might be asked for, in the progress of the trial; and to yield nothing — not an inch — not a hair's-breadth — and to take nothing for granted.

All eyes were upon the Major, and every look and motion, however natural, was watched, as if it betokened some deep and mysterious, though calmly matured purpose. The reputation of Mr. Fay, and the serene self-assurance of his manner, as well as the lofty composure and gentlemanly seriousness of the Major — while they foreshadowed something out of the common way, had a soothing effect upon the bar, and upon most of the bystanders, though not upon the prosecutor, the clerk, nor upon certain of the subordinates, understrappers, door-keepers, and outsiders, who get their bread by their belief in the guilt of every human being who has been charged by a grand jury, and openly arraigned for any offence — no matter what — for suicide would be no exception.

The day being fixed, and the arrangements for trial completed, the Major and Mr. Fay withdrew into the large antechamber, and seating themselves together by an open window, and apart from all eavesdroppers, not so much for consultation, the time for that having now gone by, as for the interchange of thought, whereby each might understand the feelings of the other, without any direct or troublesome questioning, began to review the leading facts of the case.

"You look disturbed and anxious, my dear Sir," said Mr. Fay, with a pleasant smile, after they had got through, — "I hope you have no serious misgivings?"

"To tell you the truth," answered the Major, "I hardly know

what to say. From the first, I have been over-anxious, perhaps, though not so much on my own account, as you know. Having the power to vindicate myself at any moment — time being allowed me to bring in my witnesses — though I could never do so without impeaching a dear friend, no longer alive to defend himself, as he might, if he were here — I have been hoping, and hoping, against hope, I acknowledge, till within the last half-hour, that if the trial were postponed, something might turn up to clear me, without committing him, or disquieting his family; or that, if the worst happened, his vindication might be as clearly established as my own, though not so directly perhaps, by the very same witnesses. But now — since we are not even to ask for delay, and are to go to trial on Tuesday next, under the last arrangement, happen what may; and I am left wholly in the dark, for the reasons that have decided you at this late hour to a change of operations, you must not wonder, if, with so much at stake — everything under heaven, my dear Sir, that would make life endurable — you find me looking troubled and anxious; but, as I have told you before, and as you have seen from the first, I have such entire confidence in your judgment, that I am willing to leave the arrangements altogether with you, to abandon all my first purposes, and to ask no more questions of you, my counsel, than I would ask of a physician, after he had made himself master of my case, and *fixed* upon a course of treatment for me."

"From the bottom of my heart I thank you, my dear Sir! and all the more, because, to tell you the truth, my reserve with you just now, is not only unlike anything I was ever guilty of before, but unprofessional. We need the utmost freedom with our clients, — but I am under a pledge; and having entire faith in the good sense and cool judgment of your friend, Mr. Bayard, notwithstanding his peculiarities, I must beg of you to tranquillize yourself, and put your trust in him, as I do."

"I put my trust in the Lord, Mr. Fay, — otherwise I should be downhearted, if not absolutely frightened, when I call to mind that Mr. Bayard, whatever else he may be, is no lawyer."

"I beg your pardon, Major. Mr. Bayard is not only a lawyer — but a very able lawyer — so far as a knowledge of the great principles of jurisprudence, and the administration of law

are concerned; and I must acknowledge myself greatly indebted to him, for many valuable suggestions in the progress of your business; I do not know that he ever practised at the bar, though he was admitted many years ago, not only into all the higher courts of Pennsylvania, but into the Supreme Court of the United States; hence my willingness to be led, contrary to my first purposes, and my ready acquiescence in that last proposition, which startles you so much. Are you satisfied?"

"Yes — if you are."

"I wish he would allow me to communicate some things he has told me, or to say what I believe with regard to some others, which he still keeps to himself; but thus much I can say, and I will say — he would never have urged you, as he did just now, to say that you were ready for trial, without being *sure* that he had the game in his own hands. What he means to do — what he has heard, to justify a change of front in the presence of the enemy — for when he left me last evening, he concurred with me altogether in the necessity of delay — I do not know; but one look into his lighted eyes and glowing countenance just now, when he touched your elbow and insisted on your answering that you were ready for trial, satisfied me that something had happened to justify him in the change of procedure — and to satisfy both you and me."

The Major smiled — but there was an air of deep, mournful sadness underneath the smile; and when he shook hands with Mr. Fay and walked off, that gentleman saw, that notwithstanding the generous confidence manifested by his client, there was a feeling of disquietude to be overcome, which he wanted courage to meddle with; and he followed him to the door, and even to the steps of the carriage, without being able to suggest a word more of encouragement or comfort, — or to say anything whatever in relation to that which he himself was looking for, human help; though he spoke in a cheerful voice, and begged him, as they parted, with a hearty grasp of the hand, to be of good cheer, and give himself no sort of uneasiness for the morrow.

"'Wretched comforters are ye all,'" thought our friend, the Major; and he was on the point of saying as much, by way of a word in season; but something withheld him — his heart was

too full, and much too heavy, — and then, too, he was far from being satisfied with himself.

The weather was warm; the blue skies, the rustling leaves, the cool plashing of the Park fountain, with its "loosened silver," very soothing and pleasant; and at another time they would have filled his heart with joy and thankfulness, and a childlike, cheerful trust; but now there was a cloud about his way — darkness within and without — and when he looked up to the blue empyrean, he found himself no longer able to see through the transparent depths, or to find the throne "high and lifted up," which he yearned for; and the noise of the wind among the tree-tops, instead of foretelling an abundance of rain, foreshadowed nothing but tears; and the lively rattling of the water, was, at the best, only a kind of distant, half-subdued, half-smothered *murmuring*, which the air seemed to be full of, so that when he listened to the beating of his own heart, he found the murmuring there, like a mysterious echo.

He began to grow nervous, and more and more unhappy, as the carriage trundled along the crowded thoroughfare. Afraid to be left alone — yet unwilling to make others unhappy — restless and peevish — he determined not to present himself at the cottage, until he had overcome the Adversary and the Accuser in what now threatened to be a death-grapple.

With a view to while away the time, he left the carriage and took a ramble, and went wandering hither and thither, hour after hour, almost without knowing where he was, and completely bewildered at times, till his attention was called by a large placard in a by-street he was wholly unacquainted with, inviting all to enter the house of God, for a few minutes of prayer. He durst not disobey the call. Passing through a dark, wide passage-way, he entered a room which appeared to be thronged and crowded with shadows and spectres — motionless and silent as the grave. But before he had reached his seat, a murmur of prayer was heard afar off, growing louder and louder — the light streamed in from a large colored window, and becoming reconciled to the dimness, he was able to see gray-haired men and mothers in Israel, and a multitude of young and fashionably-dressed people, sitting with their heads bowed in silent prayer. Suddenly

a song of triumph burst forth spontaneously from every part of the house — and then a few words of earnest exhortation — and then a note was read, asking prayers for a child afar off; and for a whole hour these exercises were continued, until the man of sorrow, who had found himself in their midst, without knowing wherefore, began to feel soothed, and tranquillized, and softened like Saul, as if an evil spirit of unbelief had been played to — and not in vain. Twice he partly rose to offer a word of prayer; but his heart died away within him, — and he had no voice — no strength — and he was obliged to take his seat, and cover his face with his hands; being for a while too unhappy for worship — too much troubled with secret misgivings to go to his Father — and having no hope from earthly friends, was in no humor for seeking others. But these feelings were not allowed. He began to believe, with the Patriarch, that God was there — and he knew it not. He trembled — rose up — and after a short struggle, broke forth into a simple, fervent, and very earnest cry, the substance of which was, "Help, Lord, or I perish!" And straightway there fell a shadow upon all the faces round about — and then there was a sound of sobbing — and then there came an answer of peace. Others followed, and prayed for the stranger; and when he left the church, his heart was full to overflowing with new trust and hopefulness, and with a solemn joy.

Soon after this, he found himself near Delmonico's, and feeling weary and faint, he entered; and going away off into a far corner by himself, sat a long while, covering his face with his hands, and resting his elbows on the table before him, without speaking or moving.

"What would you please to have, Sir?" said a smart, glossy-haired, perfumed waiter, in a white jacket and apron, like a fashionable hair-dresser.

"Nothing at present, thank you."

"Have the paper, Sir?"

"Thank you."

And the paper was handed to him, which he did not even look at; and the bill of fare was laid before him, and the plates were changed, and the silver forks rubbed, and the chairs moved, as if to accommodate others; but all to no purpose — he did not look

up; and the waiter left him till he should come to his senses, looking mysterious, and shaking his head portentously, however, as he went away.

At last, a step was heard — another chair was moved — and a voice came to him, as if somebody was near enough to breathe into his very ear, saying, — "Watchman! what of the night?"

The Major started, as if his own thoughts had become audible; for with him it was already nightfall — near midnight, indeed, — and growing darker and darker every moment, with the growing stillness, and the slow heaving of his chest, and he began to be wholly disheartened once more.

"Oh, is it you, my excellent friend? How glad I am to see you!" said he, looking up.

"Not half so glad as I am to see thee, George, — but what business has thee here?"

"Well, — I hardly know. I was faint and hungry, and being pretty well acquainted, happened to look up in passing the door, and then I took my seat here, to be out of the way."

"But thee has ordered nothing, I see."

"I believe you are right, my dear Sir. Waiter!"

"Sir!"

"What will you have, Mr. Bayard? Just choose for yourself, will you?" handing the card.

Mr. Bayard, after glancing over it, ordered a cup of coffee, and a plate of terrapin stew.

"What wine will you have, Mr. Bayard?"

"Only what I have ordered — coffee — I never meddle with anything nearer the fermented juice of the grape."

"Do thee often dine here?" continued he, on seeing the waiter, who had grown exceedingly attentive all at once, bring two or three plates, and set them on the table before the Major.

"Very seldom of late, my dear Sir; but when we first arrived, I used to breakfast here two or three times a week, to avoid the tiresome regulations of our hotel."

"But thee seems to be low-spirited — under a cloud, friend George. I hoped better things of thee, after what fell from thy mouth at the prayer-meeting to-day."

The Major started — and a superstitious thrill shot through

his veins; but he soon recovered — and a pleasant conversation followed, upon a variety of subjects, foreign to that which had taken possession of his whole mind before, till Mr. Bayard, pushing away his cup, and wiping his mouth with the napkin held by the ends at arm's length — as none but people who have been abroad ever think of doing, turned suddenly upon the Major, and asked him where he was at the time of his brother-in-law's death?

"In South America," was the reply.

"How soon did thee hear of his death?"

"Not until I returned to Philadelphia, where I found a parcel waiting for me, with letters from Elizabeth, and a ring — this ring, you see here."

"Let me see that ring, if thee please."

The Major drew it from his finger, and put it into his hands.

"Does thee know the history of this ring, friend George?"

"I believe not, — something I have heard about its having once belonged to Tippoo Saib; a story I never believed, though my poor brother-in-law did, to his dying day."

"I hope," said Mr. Bayard, taking out a penknife and touching a very delicate spring, which caused one of the serpents to gape, and set the carbuncle eyes of both sparkling, as with rage, — "I hope there is no deadly poison here now."

"None, whatever. I took very good care to have that question settled, at once and forever, as soon as the ring came into my possession; for, to tell you the truth, I did not feel half satisfied with what I was told of the deadly drop; nor would I wear the ugly thing as I do, though I believe it to be harmless now, but for the desire expressed by Harper upon his death-bed, that I should always wear it; and that, when I was done with it, I should bequeath it to his boy, Arthur; because to that ring, he said, he was indebted for his life, and for something indeed more precious than life — escape from dishonor. I never understood what he meant, and have always intended to ask; but whither should I go? My poor sister knows nothing more than I do — nor does Arthur — but I see by your looks, my dear Sir, that you do. Can you clear up the mystery?"

"I can."

"And will you?"

"Yes; but upon the condition that thee never allows thy sister, or thy nephew, to know the truth."

"If you think I may safely make such a promise, my dear Sir — though I never did such a thing in my life before — I will do so."

"I think thee may. Listen. Harper Maynard was my dearest friend for twenty-five or thirty years. After his marriage, he went abroad. I followed him, and saw more or less of him, year after year, till I found him getting too adventurous, and going into what I believed to be dangerous and unbusiness-like operations. I remonstrated. He persisted. A coolness then sprang up between us, and I went on my travels. About the time of the great commercial panic of 1839 — after the failure of the United States Bank — I happened to be on my way home to America, when circumstances led me through London. The very first day of my arrival, amidst the many stoppages and failures, I heard the house of Maynard & Co. mentioned as tottering. I called on him at once, — we shook hands, and forgave each other. I questioned him about his affairs. He acknowledged that they were in a very precarious condition — that having always relied upon the Bank of England for discounts, they had reckoned upon it as usual for the paper they held, which one week before might have been cashed for three per cent., — but so many failures had happened that the bank was frightened, and obliged to refuse the best of paper. I was not satisfied, — and as I understood that on the morrow the crisis would come, I resolved to bestir myself, without allowing him to know my purpose, and if he could satisfy me, to apply whatever means I might be able to command, in any way, to his relief. My arrangements were all made before ten o'clock that evening, and I had just put aside the Book, and was about going to bed, when, all at once, it occurred to me that there was something very strange in the wild earnestness of his manner — and in the trembling of his hands — when we parted on the steps of his door; his look was mournful, and he clung to me, I now remembered, as he had never done before. At the time, I thought very little of these things; we had been separated for a long while, and had just been reconciled, and of course were likely to

manifest a feeling out of the usual way. But I began to grow uneasy; and in short, after struggling awhile against a superstitious foreboding, till I could bear it no longer, instead of going to bed, I went directly to his house. At first, I was denied. The servant said he was not at home. I knew better, and told him so — for I saw a light in his little study; and twice, while I was waiting there, I saw a shadow pass before the window, and stop, and throw up its arms — and I knew that I had no time to lose. I sent the man up with my name on a letter, having no card — we never use cards — he returned, saying that Mr. Maynard was not very well, but hoped to see me on the morrow. Whereupon, I pushed by the man, — who fled before me, as if I had been a thief or a house-breaker, and following hard after him, entered the study without notice.

"Thy brother, who was then sitting by a table, in his dressing-gown and slippers — and pale as death — looked up, and then tried to conceal something he held in his hand, which attracted my attention. It was that very ring. I saw at once what he had in view, for he had long worn it, with the drop of deadly poison, as he himself told me, concealed therein. Though I never put much faith in the story, and never had the least fear of his making any use of it, I had remonstrated with him over and over again, upon the folly and rashness of wearing such a dangerous jewel, which, by some possibility, might fall into the hands of another, and lead to fatal consequences. To oblige me, though he said no stranger, unacquainted with the secret spring which opened the reservoir, would ever be able to find it, he consented to put the dangerous bauble away where it would be safe, and wear it no longer himself; nor had he worn it for years.

"And now — there lay that ring on the table, — and near it, a small narrow-bladed penknife, open — the very knife he had once used in my presence to touch the delicate spring I have mentioned.

"While talking with him, I managed to lean over the spot where he had shuffled the ring underneath a file of loose papers, and got possession of it. A brief explanation followed — tears and sobs — and prayerful acknowledgment to our heavenly Father; and then we embraced, like two brothers; and I never left him

till the house of Maynard & Co. were safe; — and now, thee'd better go home, George. Thee is wanted, I know; — and they may be troubled more than thy sister would be willing to acknowledge, if thee should keep dinner waiting."

"Will you go with me?"

"Yes, — I should like to see thy sister Elizabeth before the trial."

"And stop over night?"

"Yes; if nothing happens to change my purpose, or drive me away, as before."

On board the ferry-boat, they found the people talking more about revivals, and awakenings, and the wonderful conversions, and strange behavior of their friends and acquaintances, than about business, or stocks, or the last European advices.

"When I was here last fall," said a serious-looking Downeaster, of a commanding presence and great simplicity of manner, "go where I would, the great question was, — '*What will become of us?*' Three months later, in going my business rounds among the very same people, the question was, — '*What shall we do to be saved?*' And now, at every turn, wheresoever I go, I hear substantially the question, — '*Who is on the side of the Lord?*'"

A deep silence followed, and great thoughtfulness; and if there had been a few miles farther to go, the passengers would have resolved themselves into a prayer-meeting perhaps, — and why not? — stranger things had happened. There were symptoms not to be mistaken, before they touched the landing-place; people coming together, and shaking hands in silence; and others going by themselves and whispering together; and some distributing tracts, — and all that was overheard went to show that most of the bystanders were familiar with what was going on, either at the John Street Church, or at the business-men's prayer-meeting, on Broadway, or at Dr. Cheever's, or at the Stuyvesant Institute.

On their way home, after they had crossed the ferry, the Major and his venerable associate entered into conversation upon the subject of prayer; and after awhile the Major was led to acknowledge, that within the last few days, just when he most

needed the consolation of prayer, he had found much less comfort in the exercise than he had months before, when, superadded to all that he now had to fear, was the belief that all his plans in life were defeated, that he and his poor sister, and the children, were beggars. How strange! that just now, when the cloud was lifted, and all his other worldly prospects were brightening, and he had so much reason for thankfulness, and only one thing to fear, — and that, however shapeless, and vast, and overwhelming, under the aspect in which it first presented himself, no longer terrible, since, judging by all he understood from Mr. Fay, he had, to use that gentleman's language, the game in his own hands, — how strange that he should feel the pressure more than ever! and that, feeling it as he did, more and more every day, so that he could neither eat, nor sleep, nor sit still, nor avoid feeling unhappy himself, and making others unhappy, nor control his impatience and fretfulness, there should be no relief in prayer.

"Strange! do thee say? It may be so to thee; but I have had a longer, if not a larger experience, friend George, and to me it is far from being strange," said his companion. "When we are tried with but one great heavy sorrow, we always give way; but when these heavy sorrows are multiplied, and grow more and more discouraging, until we are beset on every side, within and without, as we are sure to be at last, if nothing else will do — and we know not which way to look, and have no hope in ourselves — we sometimes feel uplifted and strengthened by the very greatness of the pressure. The largest pearls are found in the deepest waters; and the diver who goes down to a great depth, and who would be crushed, if the tremendous pressure were confined to a portion of his body, is able to withstand a thousand times more, if it be equalized; and grows buoyant by the help thereof. The atmosphere of trial, too, is like the atmosphere we breathe. If allowed to press upon a few square inches of our bodies, we perish; but if it bear with the weight of tons, or of mountains upon us, above and below, and within and without, and on every portion alike, how freely we move! — like the dwellers in the deep sea."

"Your illustrations, my friend, are very beautiful and very true; and when I am altogether myself — as in the morning,

after a sleepless night, when I have had visions, and been scared with dreams, till the hair of my flesh rose — I begin to breathe freely and see clearly, and am ready to acknowledge that the fault is my own; — that I am asking a miracle of God for my help, and growing impatient under his fatherly administration."

"Well, persevere. He is trying thee, as gold, seven times in the fire. Be patient and hopeful, and put thy trust in the Lord, — in that friend who 'sticketh closer than a brother,' — 'the Man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief.' Much of thy trouble, George, proceeds, I verily believe, from the fact that thee has forsaken the way of thy fathers — gone over to the Church of England, without being fully satisfied — and art now exercised by these revivals and prayer-meetings, and unsettled perhaps."

"I believe you are right, my friend; but inasmuch as the Episcopalians themselves, our conservatives, are coming into the movement, and bishops are found in the chair, urging the people to speak and pray for themselves, and the great brotherhood of worshippers are beginning to acknowledge one another as belonging to the same household of faith — why may we not hope that we shall yet see these denominational distinctions overlooked for a while, as in the presence of God the Father, and the whole nation, whether believers or unbelievers, worldly or unworldly, brought to their knees — and perhaps all the nations of the earth?"

The venerable man was moved to uncover his head for a few minutes, and to hold his hat before his eyes, in silent prayer; and then he drew forth a small and very much worn pocket-Bible, and opening it, read as to himself — though loud enough to be understood by his companion — the following passage: "Why art thou cast down, O my soul! and why art thou disquieted within me?"

The silence continued, till they reached the cottage — or Hazelwood, as they began to call it now, — not because anything in the shape of a hazelwood was to be found in that whole region round about, so far as they knew; but simply because they had to choose between cedar, arbor vitæ, and hazel, with their compounds — all other pleasant and easy names in the neighborhood having been pre-appropriated.

Not a little to their surprise, the first person they saw, as they stepped upon the piazza, was Mr. Fay himself, whom they had left so busy that he could not promise to see them for a whole week, and near him, Julia. They were standing together at the window, as if in very earnest conversation; and Julia looked flushed and troubled, though her eyes danced with gladness, at something Mr. Fay said just as Arthur passed the window.

Dinner had been delayed a whole hour — and when it was served, Arthur could not help seeing that his mother had so managed as to bring Mr. Fay and Julia together, and that, for some reason, which he tried in vain to fathom, their conversation was carried on in so low a tone, that his mother only was able to take a part in it from time to time. Julia colored when their eyes met, and when she raised the glass to her lips, her hand shook; but still she seemed on the best of terms with Mr. Fay, though Arthur caught her studying the countenance of that gentleman, while he was engaged in conversation with her uncle or Mr. Bayard, in a way that puzzled him.

After the cloth was removed, the whole party entered into a free conversation upon matters and things in general, instead of segregating, or crystallizing into groups and pairs; and Arthur learned from his mother, who seemed a little anxious to divert his attention from Julia and Mr. Fay, that all the arrangements had been completed for bringing over Mrs. Archibald, little Edith, Charley, and the dog; but owing to the unexpected turn the trial had just taken, they had given up the idea for the present, for, in the midst of their anxiety and sorrow, when they so much desired to be alone with the Comforter, how could they bear the presence of comparative strangers? No, no; it was no longer to be thought of, until the question of life or death was determined for Uncle George; and then, if the issue were what they all hoped for, and, upon their faith in Mr. Fay, now resolutely believed in — if their continual asseverations might be trusted, — how much happier they would be for the delay! While, on the contrary, if, by any possibility, it should turn out otherwise — but no! they would not allow themselves to think of any such possibility. They turned away from the shuddering darkness, and shut their eyes — all of them — and all without breathing

a syllable, or showing by a look how deeply they were exercised and how much afraid they were to acknowledge their misgivings and forebodings, even to themselves.

Mr. Fay would not consent to take a bed, nor even to stay long after the coffee; but he had time, nevertheless, for a private interview with Uncle George, and for much whispering with Julia and her aunt Elizabeth, or, if not whispering — downright whispering — for a good hour's talk, first and last, in very low tones.

By and by, however, something happened which startled Julia, and gave quite a new expression to her beautiful face, eager, and almost impassioned, but changeable as the shadows of a sunset sky upon deep water.

Of his own accord, and rather abruptly, Mr. Fay introduced the very subject upon which Mr. Bayard and the Major had been talking on their way to the cottage. He too, it seemed, had been struck — and, as he acknowledged, not a little *amused*, by the conversation about him, as they were crossing the ferry. Instead of the walking fore and aft, and the continued rustle of newspapers, and cracking of peanuts, which had always been the subject of complaint or remonstrance, the people were either silent, or engaged in low, half-whispered conversation, and whenever a word reached his ear, he found that, instead of being about business, or the news from Europe, or the police, or the opera, or the monstrous pretensions of some Fifth Avenue sharper — it was almost always about prayer, and the answers to prayer, as reported in the Observer, and the Tribune, and other newspapers.

Mr. Fay was not fully aware of the effect produced upon all about him, by his acknowledgment that he had been *amused* with what he heard and saw on board the ferry-boat. There was no scoffing — no sneering — no irreverence — for Mr. Fay was too much a man of the world, whatever his unacknowledged opinions might be, and much too familiar with the aspect of the times, to hazard anything offensive on the subject of prayer, though, while toying with a bunch of grapes, he managed to have it understood that he had no faith in prayer; or, to use the very language he employed, "that he had never been able to satisfy himself on the subject of prayer;" and this, while he acknowledged, "that our

Saviour prayed, and taught his followers to pray, and that from the beginning, the priests and prophets and kings of old were always praying — and to whom? — to the *Unchangeable Jehovah!*"

There was a something in the quiet self-complacency of their guest, when he said this, even more than in the language he employed, which appeared to trouble Mrs. Maynard and her brother, while it alarmed Julia, and roused Arthur.

"I grant you," continued Mr. Fay, with the serene, self-assured look of one who is quite sure of his position, but being a philosopher, and, of course, indulgent by nature to human weakness, pitied all who entertained a different opinion — "I grant you that the unchangeable Jehovah is sometimes represented as *changeable*."

"Ah! and how so, Winthrop?" asked William Bayard.

"Sometimes by repenting, and sometimes by granting a reprieve, after judgment has been entered on, and execution issued."

Julia grew more and more uneasy, and a look was interchanged with her aunt, which Arthur did not quite understand, though he felt pleased, in spite of himself.

"For example," continued the philosopher in that low, quiet, smooth voice, which Arthur so hated — and so feared — "he sends the prophet to Hezekiah, to say to him, that he shall die and not live. The message is delivered — Hezekiah turns his face to the wall, and weeps and prays — and God relents, and fifteen years are added to his life. And so too, when the prophet Jonah is sent to Nineveh — I wish you would turn to the passage, Miss Julia, and read it for us — will you?"

At any other time, and under almost any other circumstances, had she been requested to do this, at a dinner table, and among strangers, Julia would have shrunk from the trial with fear and trembling, but now her spirit was up — she breathed hurriedly — her color came and went — she felt herself called upon as a witness for the truth — and she obeyed.

"Beautiful, exceedingly!" murmured Mr. Fay, just loud enough to be overheard by Arthur, as Julia finished the chapter. "And now, just observe the language — there is no qualification

you see — no condition — but the judgment is absolute, and Jonah announces from the *unchangeable Jehovah* that, after forty days, Nineveh shall be destroyed; but lo! the king and people repent in sackcloth and ashes — and Nineveh is spared!"

"And these are the very cases you rely upon," said Arthur, with kindling eyes, and great earnestness of manner, as if replying to a sneer, — "*these!* — to show the utter worthlessness of prayer!"

The philosopher was thunderstruck — astonished beyond measure, at the suddenness, and startling boldness of the attack; and Julia trembled from head to foot, while Mr. Bayard and her aunt Elizabeth looked as if they were afraid to acknowledge what they felt; and the philosopher, with a compassionate smile, began casting about for a reply.

"Not so fast, my venerable friend!" he replied, with a glance of encouragement for Julia, which betrayed not only a secret uneasiness, but some degree of embarrassment.

"Why, what do these two cases prove, my dear Sir!" continued his youthful antagonist, "but that our heavenly Father does hear and answer prayer, and this, however unchangeable he may be — and what more do we require to know?"

Julia turned to Arthur with a look he never forgot; her eyes flashed, and then filled — and then she turned her face toward his mother; and William Bayard clutched Arthur's knee, upon which his hand had been resting, with a suddenness and strength which made him jump.

"Very fair," continued the imperturbable Mr. Fay; "but then observe, what becomes of God's *unchangeableness?* You give that up, of course."

"I do not see why," said Arthur — hesitating, and then shutting his eyes for a moment, as if in secret prayer — while his mother and uncle, and Mr. Bayard and Julia sat looking at him, and waiting his reply, as if they trembled for him, "though God be unchangeable, man is not; and if we repent, and turn from our wickedness, He declares that he will abundantly pardon; and this too, without any qualification or condition."

"Not so bad!" exclaimed the philosopher, glancing at Julia, as if he had only been playing with jackstraws for her amuse-

ment, while the rapid changes of his countenance greatly encouraged Arthur; "but you must remember that in both cases mentioned, the judgment pronounced is unconditional. The unchangeable Jehovah does not say to Hezekiah, 'Thou shalt die, and not live — *except* thou turn thy face to the wall, with prayer and weeping,' nor to Nineveh, 'within forty days, thou shalt be destroyed, *unless* thou repent in sackcloth and ashes.'"

"And why should he?" retorted Arthur, his color mounting, as he spoke, and the deep, musical vibration of his chest betraying a great inward struggle, "as the supreme Lawgiver of the universe, you will not deny that he may prescribe his own conditions, Mr. Fay?"

Mr. Fay nodded complacently.

"And, as the Supreme Lawgiver, — why may he not publish those conditions beforehand — or withhold them — according to his own good pleasure, and still be the unchangeable Jehovah?"

Mr. Fay was evidently astonished. He saw too, that Arthur had all the others with him; and so, springing from his chair, he exclaimed, "Capital! give me your hand! if I had thought you so cunning of fence, I would have seen you hanged, before I would have entered the list with you — as Sir Andrew Aguecheek would say; — but I must be off — good-night all!" and thereupon he ordered his carriage, and the controversy ended, as such controversies rarely do, and Arthur and Julia were almost on good terms together, before they withdrew for the night.

CHAPTER XX.

THE day of trial was now at hand. Notwithstanding the steadfast assurance of Counsellor Fay, who must have had something in reserve, which he kept to himself — some question of law, perhaps, or some flaw in the indictment — or he could not have been so very sure, one would think; the Major was gloomy and peevish, silent and thoughtful, and oftentimes, while appearing to strive with a Christian manfulness against the encumbering shadow, so absent-minded, that he would not even hear what was said to him as they sat alone together, hour after hour, in the daytime or late in the evening; or if he heard at all, it would be without appearing to understand or to remember; and what alarmed the family more than anything else — more indeed than his changed look and altered voice, and the startling suddenness of his movements, when, after a long silence, like that we are accustomed to in the chamber of death, he would spring up from the sofa, and look about him, as if wandering in his mind, or not fully awake, was a growing forgetfulness, and a selfish indifference to the comfort of others, wholly foreign to his nature. Magnanimous and considerate, — and so unselfish as he had always been, this unhappy change kept Mrs. Maynard awake, and filled her with dismal apprehensions, which deprived her of all appetite and strength, and sometimes of all hope, for a season. But she was faithful in prayer, and her heart swelled with trust and thankfulness, whenever she thought of Him who said to the disciple about to be sifted by the great Accuser, — "I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not;" and she was greatly strengthened and comforted.

Another circumstance, which came to her knowledge on the afternoon of Monday, preceding the day of trial, went far to en-

courage her, and fill her heart with new hope, even while it filled her eyes with tears. Mr. Bayard, who was a regular attendant at the prayer-meetings in Fulton Street, although he seldom opened his mouth in them now, having a notion that new voices are like new truths in such a place, whatever may be their testimony, and that new witnesses are always most welcome, told her that one day when the presiding brother called for a season of silent prayer, and requested that any who wished to be prayed for, would either rise and say so — or rise without speaking — or lift a hand, which would be understood as a cry for help — as a signal of distress — many persons half-rose — and many hands were lifted, and among others that of her brother; and straightway prayers followed, and he sat near enough to that brother, without being seen, to know that he was deeply moved, and that while others around him were sobbing and weeping, as if their very hearts would break, he slipped down upon the floor, and kneeling, covered his face with his hands, while prayer after prayer came up for every troubled spirit, and a cry followed, "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest!" which thrilled the multitude, like a voice from another world. Her brother arose, just as a song of triumph burst forth from all parts of the house, and stole away without speaking to anybody, or turning his head; but Mr. Bayard was near enough to see that he was pale and trembling, and that his lashes were wet.

No wonder she was comforted and strengthened. If that beloved brother cared to be prayed for — and by strangers — it was quite certain that, with his bitter experience, and with the knowledge of himself, and of the deceitfulness of his own heart, which he had lately acquired, he must be in the habit of praying for himself; and she felt sure, that whatever else he might be, he was not *hopeless*, — and she longed to throw herself upon that dear brother's neck and say to him, "O my brother! how is it with thee? — Be not faithless, but believing!" and was only prevented, after she came to the knowledge of what had happened, by a change for the better in his look and bearing, as the hour drew nigh when he was to be put upon trial — if not for his life — at least for his character, which to a mere man

of the world, having no hope in the future, would be more dreadful.

At an early hour on the day appointed, much earlier than might otherwise have been desirable, the Major, Mr. Fay, and the witnesses for the defence, were all together in court. Calm and serious, and, judging by what followed, perfectly self-possessed; and though very pale, neither weak nor trembling, it was evident that the accused made a favorable impression, from the first, upon all who had an opportunity of studying his countenance; but of the many middle-aged men, of high character and position, he saw within the bar, and with whom he had been somewhat acquainted, either in the way of business, or over the dinner-table, no one had the courage to speak with him, or even to interchange a distant salutation, — and but for the Recorder himself, who greeted him and Mr. Fay together, as they bowed to the bench, — and a gentleman who pressed forward and gave him his hand, while the eyes of others were full of astonishment, or unbelief, and the more experienced members of the bar began bowing and whispering together, and the by-standers nodded and smiled, and the name of Talmadge was heard, the Major would have been altogether unsupported, — for even Mr. Bayard was absent, and Mr. Fay had been called off into the witness-room, where he found Mrs. Maynard looking very pale, though queenly, Miss Wentworth bustling about, and talking to everybody that would listen, with her handkerchief to her eyes, and changing her seat every time the door opened, or a step came near; Sallie Webb coquetting with her beautiful hair, which had broken loose, and fallen over her shoulders, and pushed off her little bonnet; and so managing as to show one of the prettiest ungloved hands, and a pair of the most provoking little feet you ever saw — and with such a spirited instep! — to poor Arthur, while twisting herself away, so as to peep through a crack of the door, and keep her eyes on the prisoner, — "the handsomest man she ever saw in all her life, she vowed! and she didn't care who knew it" — and watch the changes of his countenance — till she forgot to breathe; Mrs. Archibald, with the bearing of a high-bred gentlewoman, serious and thoughtful; and half a score of other witnesses in the case, he judged, by the interest they appeared to

take in everything that happened just then; two or three with police badges, and one, at least, whom he recognized for an adroit London detective, and who appeared to be listening, while he walked softly and slowly to and fro, the whole length of the room, and at such a distance, at first, as to excite no suspicion, though he came gradually nearer and nearer, at every turn, apparently lost in thought, with his hands behind him, and a toothpick playing loosely between his lips.

Mr. Fay thought proper to give the witnesses a hint, and, touching Arthur on the shoulder with a look not to be misunderstood, he called his attention to the eavesdropper.

Arthur kindled at once, and but for another touch and another look from Mr. Fay, would have instantly called the gentleman of the toothpick to account; for notwithstanding the fellow's apparent abstraction, Arthur saw by his keen, restless eyes, and the working of his mouth — to say nothing of his ears — that he was indeed a dangerous listener, and lost nothing of what was said, though he never looked that way, nor appeared to see what was going on.

The name of Mr. Fay was now called. An officer appeared at the door of the witness-room, and repeated it aloud, — there was a moment of breathless and terrible suspense — the whispering ceased all about them — the listener stopped — and all eyes were turned toward Mr. Fay, who, with a look of imperturbable serenity — almost of cheerfulness, indeed — shook hands with Mrs. Maynard and Julia, — with Julia first, Arthur observed — and bowing to the others, followed the officer.

The door opened somewhat wider, with a touch of Sallie Webb's foot, and while she was leaning forward and watching the procedure, the name of George A. Pendleton was called. The prisoner took his place near a table, with Mr. Fay on his right, and a stranger, who appeared to have been called into the case, not so much for legal consultation, as for the purpose of taking minutes, which might be depended upon hereafter. The newspapers had been full of the matter, day after day, and week after week. Paragraphs had appeared which, however intended, were of a nature to greatly prejudice the public mind against the accused. Stories were told, having no foundation whatever, and

others having barely truth enough to give them currency, were sent over the whole length and breadth of the land, through thousands of newspapers, — and not a few of them with illustrations and portraitures, no two of which were alike, while most of them were instantly recognized by the purveyors of the day, for old acquaintances. Under a show of pleasantry, many of these paragraphs were full of bitterness and sarcasm. Little or nothing was remembered of his liberality and kindness to the poor, of his attention to his countrymen abroad, nor of his great influence and high position as one of the acknowledged representatives of American character, among the largest commercial houses and wealthiest bankers of Europe; while much was hunted up, and republished, with alterations and catching amendments, about his enormous wealth, ostentation, and princely extravagance — all which was now accounted for — and about his magnificent dinners, where his countrymen were gathered by scores, along with the leaders of parliament, law officers of the crown, authors, travellers, painters and sculptors, with a sprinkling of the nobility and gentry, and, in short, samples at every gathering of all the celebrities of the day, worth calling together. Many Joe Miller stories were newly furbished up, and reproduced, and some that were hardly true thirty-five years before, when they were first told of the Duke of Sussex and Mr. Pettigrew, and their *conversazioni*, — and of the Rothschilds and their marriage suppers, and balls, and masquerades, all coming together. But however preposterous or out of date, all these mischievous anecdotes had been repeated day after day, and week after week, till, as the time drew near, and it was most needful that the accused should be considered innocent until proved guilty, there seemed to be but one opinion of the case — judging by the newspapers — and no possibility of a fair trial. Not one of the many hundreds who were continually forging new paragraphs upon the subject — so that the business of the newsboys, and village gossips, and solemn whisperers all over the land, should not flag till the question was settled forever, and nothing more was to be made by untruth — ever thought of suggesting that — perhaps — after all — there might be another side to the story; or that a man of such high character, maintained so long in the midst of a

watchful and suspicious community, always jealous of strangers from abroad, however tolerant with Americans, after they have got established, would not be very likely to cast himself headlong from a precipice, under any conceivable temptation, presenting itself in the shape of downright forgery.

The court-room was crowded, and all the approaches, lobbies, and antechambers were thronged to suffocation, and there were hundreds about the doors, huddled together on the steps, or elbowing their way through the chief entrance — not a few of whom had been waiting, hour after hour, while others had gone without their breakfast, on the morning of the trial, as thousands did at the time of the Bond Street tragedy.

The time dragged heavily; but the solemn business went on, and on, and on, with that unrelenting, cold, and heartless formality, so dreadful to the inexperienced — like a midnight procession to the tolling of a midnight bell — and the death-like stillness grew more and more oppressive, till the jury were impanelled, the witnesses called and seated by themselves — all but Julia, who was treated with the greatest possible consideration by the prosecutor, and left undisturbed, where she might hear and see all that was going on, without being flurried, or called upon to lift her veil.

The indictment being read, as before, in such a manner as to show the case to have been prejudged by the clerk of the court, however it might be regarded by others, the prosecutor stood up to lay the facts, upon which the government relied, and which he expected to prove, not so much before the court and jury, as before his brethren of the bar, and the by-standers and outsiders; representatives, most of them, of what is called by the newspapers, public opinion.

The principles of law which governed the case were stated with uncommon brevity and clearness; and the facts were so arranged, and set forth in such a masterly fashion — with such an appearance of truthfulness, and with so little of exaggeration, — that, long before he had finished, there seemed to be no hope for the accused, if one might judge by the countenances about him.

Julia, and her aunt, and Arthur, now heard the whole story

for the first time; and their hearts died away within them. They had kept clear of the newspapers; and, notwithstanding their uneasiness, had forborne questioning each other; and although Miss Wentworth and her niece had long been familiar, as they believed, with all the facts and circumstances, or with what would be called the substantial merits of the case, they had never seen them so arranged in the newspapers, and they were appalled — overwhelmed — and afraid to look each other in the face.

As the prosecutor mentioned these facts and circumstances in their order, there was no mistaking the expression of the faces about him. Julia held her breath, and Arthur felt somebody clutching at his hand — it was not his mother — and the sobbing and trembling that followed, might have unmanned him, but for the fact, that he felt the eyes of a stranger upon him, and through the thickened folds of poor Julia's gathered veil, he fancied he saw the face of a dead woman. For a moment, the delusion was frightful; but he recovered himself instantly, and putting Julia's hand into his mother's, he withdrew from the observation he had attracted a moment before, by the sudden changes of his countenance, while they were listening to the prosecutor; who, after dwelling upon the twisted and burnt fragments of notes found by the watchman in Broadway — the numbers and marks of which corresponded precisely with those which they would find in the published list of the forged notes — went on to say, with signs of deep feeling, that these very notes, corresponding with the marks and numbers, he had called their attention to, would not only be brought home to the knowledge and possession of the accused, but would be shown, by a most unexceptionable witness — whom, on account of her relationship to the prisoner, it would be a most painful duty for him to produce — to have been partially destroyed by the accused in her presence, by twisting them together and throwing them into the fire, with an acknowledgment that they were *spurious*."

Julia started; and the prosecutor, who had fastened his eye upon her, corrected himself.

"Or, rather, that they were *worthless*. Providentially the wind was high, and a strong draft took them up the flue unconsumed, and they were carried across Broadway to the Metropolitan,

where — providentially again, he must be allowed to say — they were picked up while they were yet blazing, by a watchman. It may seem strange, very strange, gentlemen of the jury," said he, "that in such weather, a twist of paper like these" — holding up the notes in two separate parcels, and in such a way as to show that they were loosely and lightly twisted at one end only, the other ends having been carefully unrolled for verification — "should have attracted the attention of the witness; but he will inform you that they were blazing when they fluttered by him, and struck the snow, and that just when he was about trampling on them with his foot, he saw something which led him to snatch them up, and extinguish the flame with his hands."

After allowing sufficient time for this array of providential facts to make a suitable impression, the prosecutor went into a detailed history of the intercepted letter; and of the notes found in it, and brought home to the possession of the accused, by the same witness, whom he, the prosecutor, had been so unwilling to produce.

The brief, clear, unimpassioned, unexaggerated statement of the learned gentleman, made a profound impression — it was not to be denied nor concealed — upon all within hearing; and especially upon the court and bar — to say nothing of the witnesses, who had now the whole array of facts before them, for the first time. The prosecutor glanced at the bench from underneath his shaggy brows, during the progress of the narration; made long pauses, and adjusted his spectacles, or took them off and wiped them with the inside of a delicate glove he kept always within reach, or took snuff with great emphasis and gravity, with his eyes upon the judge, or upon the foreman of the jury, whenever he came to a telling point; while the aged members of the bar interchanged "nods, and winks, and wreathed smiles," and most of the younger were busy in laying down the law to all who sat near enough to be whispered *into*, looking as if they had a retainer, and foresaw everything, but were in no hurry to betray themselves.

"We must have less talking and whispering, Mr. Officer," said the judge, rapping the desk with the handle of a penknife, as he spoke.

"Silence there! silence!" cried the sheriff.

"Silence in court! silence there!" shouted the subordinates; "less talking there, if you please, gentlemen!"

At this moment there was a great bustle at one of the doors, and General Talmadge and Mr. Bayard were seen elbowing their way through the crowd, followed by Arthur — flushed and heated — with his hair flying loose in the wind, and all out of breath — and making their way up to the table where the counsel for the prisoner sat leaning back in his chair, with the noble countenance of the Major full in view, and watching the changes he saw there, from a death-like paleness, to a glow of generous indignation, without a symptom of uneasiness.

"Make way there, make way!" bawled a tipstaff. "Stand back, will ye!"

The crowd heaved and surged, this way and that, as if really anxious to give the Superintendent and witnesses a free passage; but they were so wedged together, that instead of opening right and left, as they intended, they were obliged to turn sideways and shuffle backward and forward, and make themselves less, by stretching up their necks and standing on tiptoe.

But the Superintendent was not a man to be baffled or delayed by a crowd, as they well knew, and he soon reached Mr. Fay, who had been troubled by the long absence of Mr. Bayard, following so immediately after they had been asked by the court if both sides were ready, and both had answered "*Yes;*" and the Major, too, was troubled; though neither would acknowledge it to the other, now that they had him seated within reach, and looking so calm and self-possessed, with eyes that seemed preternaturally large, and bright and clear, in the shadow of his broad-brimmed hat.

He had been listening to the prosecutor, and occupying a chair just behind Julia, near the half-open door of the witness-room, while he set forth all the facts and circumstances with such apparent moderation and conscientiousness; and now, though he might well have appeared anxious, as he looked about him, and saw the telling effect upon every countenance — instead of showing the least shadow of alarm, he only waited for the prosecutor to finish, and look about him, and call upon the witnesses to step

forward — Julia, among the rest, and all by their names — to touch Mr. Fay on the shoulder, and say in a voice loud enough to reach the prosecutor himself, and most of the bar, if not the bench — "that if he were going to manage the case without help, he should get up at once, and acknowledge and admit everything as now stated by the prosecutor; so that he would have no occasion for witnesses, and poor Julia might be spared the distress of a protracted, and most painful examination."

"Indeed!" whispered Mr. Fay, with a sarcastic smile.

"I mean just what I say, Winthrop; and before thee gets through, thee will be of my opinion — or I miss my guess."

The prosecutor grew nervous and fidgety; and most of the aged members of the bar, within ear-shot, fell a-whispering, while the juniors began questioning everybody near, with "who is it? who is it?" But nobody appeared to know; and the witnesses were called upon to step forward.

"Whom will you take first?" said the judge, as they stood up together in a long row — some five-and-twenty strong, and the oath had been administered to them.

"Neither of these, your honor," said the prosecutor, — "but the young lady, I mentioned. Mr. Officer — be pleased to lead Miss Julia Parry into court."

Hearing her name called, and seeing the messenger on his way to her, Julia arose, followed by Miss Wentworth and her niece, and came forward two or three steps, and stood in the door-way waiting for him, without remembering to drop her veil — so that her wonderful face and lofty bearing — and large serene eyes — and trembling mouth — and steadfast look — were in full view of the crowd.

A murmur of heartfelt approbation filled the house, and brought the poor child instantly to her senses, and the death-like paleness gave way to a sudden flush, and the veil was instantly dropped, and the beautiful apparition vanished.

"Shall I not go for her?" whispered Arthur to Mr. Fay — trembling from head to foot, as he leaned forward.

"Not for your life, Sir! We may want you for a witness — and witnesses had better be strangers."

The officer having led her up, and placed her by the witness-

box, Mr. Attorney took charge of her, handing her in, with a low bow, and looking about over the eager, up-turned faces of his brethren, as if to prepare them for still further revelations after the veil should be lifted.

"Please your honor—I pray that the witness may be sworn."

"The lady will remove her veil," said the judge.

Julia bowed — blushed — and threw aside her veil, and after taking the oath, was requested by the prosecutor to face the jury — "the gentlemen you see there," said he, with a flourish of his right arm toward the jury-box, meant to be very impressive; but Julia saw only a row of hard, strange-looking faces — two or three shining heads without hair on the top, and others with hair that evidently belonged to somebody else, much younger and of a different complexion; one very fat man, with a large double chin, and spectacles awry upon his forehead; and another whose look fascinated her, so that she could not withdraw her gaze — having a huge, lion-like head, with a ponderous jaw, and a large, heavy black beard, from the midst of which a mass of white gushed forth, like foam from a fountain — and might never have suspected the truth, or known where to look, but for the everlasting repetition of the words, "*gentlemen* of the jury."

"Are you well acquainted with the *prisoner at the bar?*" said the prosecutor, in the blandest possible tones, while Mr. Fay's brow contracted, and Arthur's eyes flashed fire.

"Yes, Sir."

"And how long have you been so well acquainted with him?"

"From my earliest recollection."

"Is he related to you — by marriage or otherwise?"

"He is the only brother of my" — her voice faltered a little here — "of my late mother, Sir."

"Well, Miss Parry, I am sorry to trouble you, — and but for a sense of duty, which overbears all other consideration with me, I should not have called you to the witness-box." Julia bowed. "Will you be so obliging now, as to state in your own way, without being questioned, what you know of these bank-notes, which appear to have been partly destroyed by fire; and of these, which I have here in a letter bearing your signature, I believe" — Julia bowed, and colored — "and what you know

of your uncle George having had to do with them. Please to speak slowly — for we have to take down your words with great care — and address yourself to that gentleman you see there," pointing to a pompous looking, red-faced man, with white hair and a double chin.

Julia trembled, and the prosecutor handed her a chair, and with permission of the court, begged her to be seated.

"Certainly," said Mr. Fay, in reply to a questioning look from her, before she seated herself.

And straightway, without a sign of trepidation or embarrassment, she began at the beginning, and went through, slowly and distinctly, step by step, with all the facts and circumstances elicited at the examination before the grand jury; and in such a way as to fill the bar with admiration — and bring tears into the eyes of Miss Wentworth and Sallie Webb — while it only served to render the situation of the accused more hopeless, and to justify all the prosecutor had charged — and more.

"You can take the witness, brother Fay," said the prosecutor as he finished, throwing himself back in the chair, and twirling a bit of twisted paper between two of his fingers, which, after a while proved to be one of the very bank-notes he had been so chary of. He had overshot his mark therefore, and while counterfeiting a show of indifference, had betrayed himself to the keen-sighted antagonist, who had been watching every look of his eye, and every motion of his lip, and every change of countenance from the first, without allowing himself to be overlooked by anybody else.

"I have but one question to ask," said Mr. Fay.

The prosecutor began to look troubled.

"In the course of your narrative, Miss Parry, you have been called upon for the circumstances which happened at your hotel when a Bank of England note, which you had sent out to be changed, was returned to you — without any explanation."

Julia bowed.

"Allow me to ask you, if your uncle was with you at the time, and if he knew of your sending the note to be changed?"

"He did, Sir."

"Did he know it was refused and returned to you?"

"He did, Sir."

"What did he say at the time?"

"I object," said the prosecutor. "The accused must not be allowed to manufacture evidence for himself."

"Part of the *res gestæ*, your honor," said Mr. Fay. "I am entitled, I suppose, to whatever explanations were given at the time."

The evidence was ruled in, and Mr. Fay proceeded.

"What did he say?"

"Nothing that I recollect, Sir. He was sitting at the table with me, and must have heard my answer to the servant; but I do not remember that he said anything, or that he interfered in any way."

"Did he caution you then — or afterward — or had he cautioned you before, at any time, about offering any of these notes?"

"No, Sir — never."

"Yet he knew of your doing so?"

"Yes, Sir."

At this moment, in the deep stillness that followed, showing how profound the impression he had produced, and how favorable, and while the breathless attention of the court and bar was turned to the witness, and all eyes were fixed upon the prisoner, who sat calmly facing the crowd, without a change of countenance, or a look of disquietude or uneasiness, the quick eye of Mr. Fay caught Mr. Bayard in the very act of slipping a small fragment of paper toward him, which he had been playing with, and upon which he had scribbled, as if in a fit of absence a moment before, the following question: "Was there nobody else in the room with witness, when the bank-note was returned to her?" and leaning forward, without appearing to see what was written, though not a word had escaped him, he shook his head with a smile, and whispered, — "Perhaps they will bring out the answer without our help;" and then turning to the prosecutor, and saying he had no more questions to ask, he managed to secure the fragment of paper, and soon after to destroy it, without appearing to have any such purpose in view.

After two or three questions going to different points in the case, the prosecutor glanced at his notes, and appeared to recollect something of importance, for he turned off into a different path, and fastening his troublesome eyes upon poor Julia, asked her where her brother was when she last heard from him?

"At Nicaragua."

"Did he ever caution you before he went away, or afterward, about offering these notes?"

Mr. Fay smiled, but he made no objection, though it was well understood by court and bar, that if he did not, he must have good reasons for such forbearance, and all waited patiently for the answer.

"Not before he went away, Sir, but after hearing that I had enclosed some of the notes to him, which he had never received — and which I have since learned, were intercepted ——"

Mr. Fay gave her a look which brought her to herself; and the prosecutor said, "We shall explain that, by and by," and Julia continued as follows: —

"He added a few words of caution, begging me not to suffer any of the notes, under any circumstances, to get into circulation; and saying that he had good reasons for believing that they were worthless, or that there was something wrong about them — I do not give the words — I only give the substance from recollection."

"May it please the court," said Mr. Fay, rising with a deferential air, and speaking in a voice just loud enough to be heard by his brethren, "I have been very unwilling to interrupt my learned friend, or to interfere in any way with the course of examination he has chosen to pursue, but he will acknowledge I am sure, and your honor will see, that inasmuch as the witness is undergoing an examination as to the contents of a paper written by a third party, wholly unconnected, so far as now appears, with any of these transactions, I submit whether it is competent for my learned brother to question the witness without producing the letter referred to — or accounting for its non-production — supposing it to be admissible."

"If my learned brother had been patient a few minutes longer, he would have been spared the trouble he is now taking

— the paper referred to has been furnished me this morning by the witness, and is now in my hand. I propose to ask the witness whether ——"

"Am I to understand that the counsel for the prisoner at the bar objects to the paper as inadmissible, for any reason whatever?" demanded the judge.

"I might do so, undoubtedly, your honor — as a matter wholly foreign to the subject, and having, so far as now appears, nothing to do with the case — but if my brother will permit me to look at the paper, which I have not seen for a month, and have had no opportunity of examining ——"

The paper being handed to him, he ran his eye over it hurriedly, and then reaching it back, said with an air of supreme indifference, "I withdraw my objection. The government is welcome to whatever advantage they may hope to obtain by the procedure."

"Please read the paragraph relating to these bank-notes," said the prosecutor, handing the letter to Julia, "so that the jury may understand you, and be able to take down your very words, if they desire to do so."

Julia read as follows, in a clear sweet voice: —

"If I ever get back, I shall have a thorough investigation of this shameful affair, even though I should be obliged to bring it before the British Parliament. The scoundrels! to intercept a letter, and take possession of the contents, under such circumstances! I regard it as no better than highway robbery. Meanwhile, I beg of you, dear Julia, not to pass another of these notes, until you see me, or hear from me. There is something wrong about the whole business, and though I do not believe Uncle George to be blameworthy, yet ——"

"You needn't read that," said the prosecutor.

"Read the whole, if you please," rejoined Mr. Fay, with an appeal to the court, which was answered by a nod of assent, "we are entitled to the whole now."

"I have begun this very day to make my arrangement for a thorough investigation of the business; and if I should be right in my conjectures, you may depend upon seeing me, face to face, when I am least expected."

Another silence followed; and there were signs of a favorable change in the looks of the bar; and even the judge seemed to think better of the case; while the prosecutor fidgeted, and worried, and questioned the witness anew, and over and over again, till the court was obliged to interfere.

"The witness may step down," said the judge,—"all those questions have been answered before; and some of them two or three times over, Mr. Attorney."

Here was a damper; but Mr. Fay, though well satisfied with what was going on, said nothing, but busied himself with his papers, and neither looked up to the bench with a smile of approbation, nor about among his brethren, nor even at the outsiders, for encouragement.

The next witness, a burly, thick-headed fellow, turned out to be one of the policemen who arrested the Major. He told the story from beginning to end, without missing a figure, and whenever he was interrupted, went back and repeated it, almost word for word, greatly to the amusement of the old practitioners, who were not a little amazed, when he had got through, and the prosecutor said to Mr. Fay,—"you can take the witness," to hear Mr. Fay answer—"I have only one or two questions to ask."

A long pause, while Mr. Fay rummaged among his papers, evidently to prepare the audience for something out of the usual way, and set them all agog, as he had lately done, by that long pause which preceded his only question to Julia.

The judge began to grow impatient. "The counsel for the defence will proceed; we have lost too much time already," said he.

"At the time of the arrest, Mr. Officer, did you make any search for other notes?"

"Not at the time of the arrest, Sir; but as soon as we could manage to get into his room, without alarming the ladies."

"Did you make a thorough search of the premises?"

"We did so."

"Did you break open his trunks or secretary?"

"No, Sir—he handed us the keys; and we did it all quietly and handsomely."

"And what did you find?"

"Nothing, Sir — not so much as a single bank-note, nor anything that looked like one."

"Did he stand by you — or interfere — or make any objection; or try to conceal anything — papers — or letters?"

"No, Sir, — but he helped us, and emptied his pocket-books and a portfolio or two, — and left us to rummage, as we liked, and by ourselves — Bob and me."

"Did you search the person of Major Pendleton?"

"That we did!"

"Thoroughly?"

"Thoroughly — even to his shirt and stockings, and to the padding and lining of his coat and collar, and the waistband of his breeches."

A laugh.

"Silence there! silence in court!" cried the sheriff.

"Shut up!" shouted a constable.

And the eager listeners, leaning forward on tiptoe, with their mouths wide open, obeyed, and "shut up."

"And what did you find?"

"Nothing but what was all right and proper for a gentleman to have."

Another laugh; and it broke over the upturned faces of the crowd like a sudden burst of sunshine, and reached the upper tier of gray-headed dignitaries, and even lighted up the rocky forehead, and grave countenance of the judge himself.

"No Bank of England notes, good or bad, hey?"

"Not a sixpenny."

"Mr. Attorney," said Mr. Fay, "I have no more questions for this witness; and hereafter, unless something very much out of the way should happen, I shall forego the cross-examination altogether; and save the time of the court and jury, by allowing the government to proceed, without interruption or remark."

Here, Mr. Bayard reached forward, and, grasping the gentleman by the wrist, whispered something which Mr. Fay thanked him for, but begged him to be patient; — "for," said he, "there is time enough — no hurry, my dear Sir — and it would be much

better to have the facts you want, and must have, come out from the other side."

"But," persisted the shrewd Quaker, — "if the question should be overlooked — or forgotten?"

"Give yourself no uneasiness, I pray you," said the worthy counsellor, beginning to feel somewhat annoyed at the interruption — "I shall neither overlook nor forget your suggestion, I promise you."

"But, friend Winthrop — excuse me — under the arrangement just made, will the court allow thee to cross-examine the witness, even if the government should recall her?"

"*Her!*" said Mr. Fay, with some little asperity, and a slight gathering of the forehead, glancing at the prosecutor, who had been watching and listening, with signs of impatience not to be misunderstood, — "*Her!* — I must beg of you to be a little more cautious, my excellent friend. Your suggestions I value very much, and I mean to profit by them, when the proper time arrives."

"Then," said the prosecutor, with a look of subdued, though triumphant anticipation, "if I have rightly understood the counsel for the prisoner, there is to be no further cross-examination, and no interruption hereafter, till the government is through?"

Mr. Bayard began to look troubled; but the answer and look of Mr. Fay instantly reassured him, and he felt sorry and ashamed, as most people do, after the mischief is done, for having interrupted their counsel.

"Unless there should be something very much out of the usual way; or if anything new should come up to change the present aspect of the case," added Mr. Fay, as he threw himself back into the chair, with a look of settled, quiet determination, which satisfied all who knew him, that he would not be moved again, till the examination was through, happen what might.

The judge looked somewhat puzzled; and the jury began laying their heads together, and whispering; and the long-headed practitioners fell to rubbing their hands, wiping their spectacles, and nodding to one another, as if they saw breakers ahead, or mischief brewing.

The prosecutor assented to the qualification, and after a few

compliments to the bench, and many thanks to the jury for their patience, went on to prove the case, clearly and conclusively, and step by step, with that logical straightforwardness, and quiet strength of purpose, which are always needed, though rarely met with, on such occasions; till Mr. Fay himself was obliged to compliment him, just above his breath, and to acknowledge that he had presented the case after a masterly fashion. Though said in a very low voice, it reached the ears of the jury, as he intended; and seemed to have a happy effect; for while it appeared both magnanimous and just, it showed that he had nothing to fear, and relieved them at once from the trouble of judging for themselves, and prepared them for a downright, honest, manly, and truthful defence.

"Have you any more witnesses, Mr. Attorney?" asked the judge, as the prosecutor told the last of the four-and-twenty to step down. The prosecutor bowed.

"You stop here, then?" said Mr. Fay — rising deliberately from his chair as he spoke.

"For the present — yes," answered the prosecutor; and then, seeing a look pass between him and Mr. Bayard, he changed color, and seemed to recollect himself all at once, and added, — "One moment, if my brother will permit me, — there is one question which I had on my minutes, but somehow overlooked while the witness was upon the stand, which I should like to put now."

Mr. Fay nodded assent, and reseating himself, and leaning over the table, whispered to his coadjutor, William Bayard, — "now for it! — be prepared! — just what we have been waiting for! I know my good brother, and I knew it would come up at last. He has been hoping that we would put the question, as new matter, and then we might be obliged to take it as from our own witness, and if unfavorable, might not be allowed to contradict, or explain."

Mr. Bayard smiled, and shook his head, as if he would like to argue that question, but said nothing.

"Call your witness, Mr. Attorney," said the judge.

"Julia Parry! — call Julia Parry, Mr. Officer!" said the prosecutor.

Arthur started.

"Mr. Officer — step into the witness-room, if you please," continued the prosecutor, "and say to Miss Parry that she is wanted for a few minutes, at most."

Julia soon appeared — paler than ever — but looking well prepared, and thoroughly self-possessed; and followed by Miss Wentworth and Miss Webb, who seemed to have no eyes for anybody but the prisoner, who sat leaning over the table with his hands covering his face; motionless, and, to all appearance, wholly indifferent to what was going forward, or worn out with watching and anxiety, and dead asleep; or perhaps in prayer. All eyes were upon him, as the prosecutor, turning toward Julia, said to her, with a startling significance of manner, calculated to impress the jury, or the by-standers, with a belief that he was about to settle the question with what was called a *clincher*, and either oblige the witness to contradict herself with her own mouth, or shake her credit ——

"Please turn your face toward the jury, and speak so as to be understood by the court, Miss Parry."

Julia bowed, and having thrown back her veil and seated herself, though somewhat unwillingly, in the chair offered to her, waited the onset.

"I desire to recall your attention, Miss Parry," said the prosecutor, to the circumstances attending the return of that Bank of England note, which had been refused at the St. Nicholas hotel."

A pause. Julia began to breathe more freely.

"Your uncle was present, you say, when the waiter handed the note back to you?"

"He was."

"Did the waiter give any reason for the refusal?"

"No, Sir."

"Did you ask for a reason?"

"No, Sir."

"Were you not a little surprised or mortified?"

"Not in the least."

"And your uncle George, as you called him, was present and knew of the note being refused and returned to you — and, so

far as you now recollect and believe, did not interfere in any way, nor caution you?"

"Such was the fact, and such was my answer, I believe."

"And you still continue of the same belief?"

"Yes, Sir."

"Very well, Miss Parry — I have no more questions to trouble you with. Mr. Officer, please lead the witness to her friends who are waiting for her at the door, I see."

"One moment!" said Mr. Fay — "one moment, if you please — I have a question to put, before the witness leaves the stand."

"I thought my learned brother had no further questions to propose, and if I understood him aright, he waived all further cross-examination," said the prosecutor — glancing at the bench, as he seated himself.

"Conditionally," said the judge; "but here is new matter. The counsel for the prisoner will proceed."

Mr. Fay had turned to answer another suggestion of Mr. Bayard.

"Go on, brother Fay; put your question," said the judge.

"Miss Parry," said Mr. Fay, "I desire to know if there was anybody else with you, at the time the note was returned, except your uncle George?"

"Yes, Sir — two or three persons, I now recollect, and perhaps more."

"Who were they, if you please? — give me their names."

"Miss Wentworth ——"

"Her Christian name, if you please?"

"*Maria*, I believe," said Julia.

"*Marie!*" cried Miss Wentworth, herself, in a quick, sharp voice, from away behind the bar.

"*Mary!*" said William Bayard — all speaking together.

The judge smiled; the officer sung out "Silence in court!" and Mr. Fay continued.

"And who else?"

"Two young ladies of the family; I do not remember their names."

"Of what family, if you please?"

"Of the Wentworth family, as I understood."

"Fanny Cartwright and Judith Cartwright!" exclaimed Miss Wentworth, entirely carried away by her sympathy, and forgetful, as before, of all propriety. The sheriff was about to interfere, but a look from the judge prevented him.

"And the others?" continued Mr. Fay.

"Miss Sallie Webb, and Mr. Maynard — Arthur Maynard."

"The gentleman sitting here?" said Mr. Fay.

Julia bowed.

"Do you see any more of the persons you mentioned, in court?"

"Yes, Sir," — looking about, — "I see them all here except the two young ladies."

Mr. Fay's countenance brightened, — that of Mr. Attorney fell, in spite of all he could do — he began to have his misgivings — and there was a great change in the eager, anxious eyes of the people, and a change for the better too. Without knowing why, they began to have some hope for the poor prisoner.

"Allow me to ask you now, Miss Parry," continued Mr. Fay, — speaking in a very deliberate and impressive manner, and so clearly, that every syllable was heard to the uttermost bounds of the large court-room — "allow me to ask if the persons you have mentioned, or any of them, saw the note returned to you, or heard what the waiter said?"

"I do not know, Sir — I never spoke of it afterward — but we were all sitting together, and there was nothing to hinder, that I know of."

"Was the conversation carried on between you and the waiter in a low voice, or apart?"

"No, Sir."

"Was the note shown by you to anybody there?"

"Not as I remember — yes, I now recollect, that Miss Wentworth reached over and took it from the table before me, and showed it to Miss Webb, and said something to her about old acquaintances."

"Old acquaintances! and what did you understand by that, pray? — did she explain herself?"

"No, Sir, — but I understood her to mean that she was glad to see the face of an English bank-note, as an old acquaintance; and then she offered to change it for me — saying she had some gold about her, and I might return it after the flurry was over."

"What flurry?"

"The banks had all stopped paying specie, as we were told, and it was difficult to obtain silver, or indeed anything but paper, and I preferred keeping the Bank of England note."

"I have done with the witness, Mr. Attorney," said Mr. Fay.

The prosecutor seemed to be taken all aback for a moment; but he soon recovered himself, and bowing to the witness, told her she might step down.

"Any more witnesses for the government?" inquired the judge.

"One moment, your honor, — I should like to know if my brother proposes to call any of the persons just mentioned, who were present at the St. Nicholas?"

"We do not know yet," said Mr. Fay, — "but you can do so, if you think proper. They are all here — and I waive all objections; even though the note, of which we have heard so much, should not be forthcoming after all."

"Then we stop here," said the prosecutor, standing up and facing the crowd, and trying to appear perfectly satisfied with the case, and with himself; but it was "*no go*," as Mr. Fay said, soon after, at a dinner-table, where they both met as friends with the harness off, and complimented one another, like good fellows, for having played the game of life or death so beautifully.

"Adjourn the court, Mr. Sheriff," said the judge, rising as he spoke, and comparing his watch with the clock. "We are a good hour over the usual time; but may be all the fresher to-morrow. You have no more witnesses, Mr. Attorney? Stop a moment, Mr. Sheriff."

"None, I believe, your honor; nor shall we offer any further testimony, unless in the way of reply."

"It is understood, then, that you enter upon the defence to-morrow, brother Fay, the very first thing?"

Mr. Fay bowed; and the sheriff repeated the order of the

judge to adjourn the court; and the crier bawled "oh yes! oh yes! oh yes!" &c. &c. &c., and the multitude poured forth like a torrent, sweeping all before them, through the main passage-way, down over the steps, and into the Park, where a portion stopped for a few moments, and threw up their hats, and shouted "Three cheers for Mr. Fay! hurrah!" and the witnesses were let go, to breathe freely and sleep soundly — if they could — like the fragments of a broken-up and overwearied procession of mourners, trying to find their way back to their hiding-places — not to the holes of the rocks, for they were honest enough on both sides, perhaps — but to their closets, and bedchambers, and secret places of prayer.

As the Major walked away, arm-in-arm with his counsel, and followed by Mr. Bayard, he saw signs of encouragement and hope all about him — and he managed to swallow the rising bitterness in his throat, as many a hand was thrust toward him now, which, but a little time before was withheld, as if there were contamination, or leprosy, in the touch; and people who were strangers at the opening of the court, were now lifting their hats to him on every side, as he moved away.

And wherefore? What had happened? What had changed the opinion of these people so suddenly? What new aspect had been given to the case? Nobody could say — yet the tide was clearly setting in his favor, and the weathercock of public opinion was getting uneasy and fluttering for a change, as if a little afraid of rusting on the spindle, if left there over night.

But, although the great unreasoning multitude knew not, the ablest members of the bar knew, and the judge knew, and all spoke of it afterward, that the change of opinion was wholly owing to the admirable management of Mr. Fay, in withholding himself to the last, and possessing his soul in patience, and never allowing himself to be hurried or provoked into a precipitate move.

CHAPTER XXI.

ALTERNATIONS there must be — shadow and sunshine — ebb and flow — sorrow and joy — in the life of man; else would he never know the consolation of change, the comfort of relief; but counting on his own strength, if untroubled and prosperous, he would go through the world rejoicing over the weakness of others; wondering why they have not been as cool-headed, and sagacious, and foreseeing, as himself; sympathizing with nobody — and wholly unacquainted with the hearts of his fellow-men — for who that has not had the cup of astonishment and trembling held to his own lips, can sympathize with another? — who that has not felt sorrow, can believe in sorrow, or trial, or bereavement? — and what do we ever truly know of others, unless they have need of us, or we of them?

"The heart is like the sky," says the unhappy Byron, while groping blindfold, and wretched, and weary, among the shadowy things that beset his path, and hedged him round against all the good influences of better and wiser men, "and changes night and day too, *like the sky*," he adds, — and who will not acknowledge the truthfulness of the parallel? And then, as with a wail of despair — a cry like that of Esau, when he came to himself, and saw that he had cast away his birthright, and for a mess of pottage, an exceeding great and bitter cry — he finishes the dark and terrible apostrophe with these portentous words — a prophecy almost Hebraic in its awful earnestness: —

> "Now o'er it clouds and thunder must be driven,
> And darkness and destruction, as on high!"

And is it not true? The tree of knowledge has never been the tree of life — whether it be a knowledge of the world, or

the mysteries of man's nature, of science or learning. And we need as much the cloud by day, while breathing an atmosphere of sunshine, as the pillar of fire by night, while our wanderings are through darkness and horror; else do we forget ourselves — our fellow men — our heavenly Father — and our Saviour; to-day, in our self-sufficiency, while saying to others, "Behold this great Babylon, which I have builded!" and to-morrow, in our despairing helplessness.

At times, during this day of trial, the unhappy man was upheld by a calm and holy trust in the Lord, and then he wondered at himself, that he should ever have felt otherwise — but anon — a word, a look, a change of thought would fill him with dismay, and oversweep all the crowded future with "darkness and destruction, as on high." Yet he had striven steadfastly, manfully, and hopefully, through all these changing hallucinations — up to the very last hour — when he found himself once more at home, with a beloved sister watching over him, as he lay upon the sofa, in a dim light, with his hands clasped, and his eyes shut, and tears — ay, tears — filtering slowly, and drop by drop, through the lashes; Julia leaning her forehead against the wall, at one end of the sofa; and Arthur, in the deep shadow of a projection, at the other. Nobody spoke — nobody seemed to breathe — and the silence grew more and more oppressive.

"Dear brother," said Elizabeth at last, "this will never do! We must bestir ourselves. We must be hopeful — putting our trust in the Lord Jehovah, in whom is everlasting strength. Shall we not have a word of prayer together?"

"No word of prayer, I beseech you, dear Elizabeth — but we may kneel together in silence, and our petitions may go up together, and be translated by the Comforter with groanings that cannot be uttered, and find acceptance."

"With all my heart," said Elizabeth. And straightway they all came together, kneeling side by side, in a shadowy stillness like that of the house of death; and all their faces were covered, and there was the sound of low breathing and sobbing, and the murmur of inward prayer, as if all their hands were interlocked, and all their wishes were the same.

"I do not understand these alternations. my dear Elizabeth,"

said her brother, as they rose from prayer, and seated themselves around the table; "nothing has happened to change the aspect of my case — nothing unfavorable, certainly — nothing which I had not foreseen and provided for; and yet, here am I — so strong and hopeful but a few hours ago, now weaker than a child! wishing it were all over, almost in any way — suspense being more dreadful to me than almost any certainty — feeling as if I would give the world for a few hours of quiet sleep, yet afraid, absolutely afraid to be left alone."

"*Dear* brother!"

"But for that mysterious fear, I should go to bed immediately, knowing that if I could sleep, I should be so refreshed for to-morrow; but sure, from the experience of the last week, that I should lie awake, hour after hour, haunted by the most dreadful and vague, and at the same time, the most unreasonable apprehensions — vast, shadowy, and overwhelming; and of such a nature, that, although I may rouse myself so far as to see how empty and foolish, and wicked they are, after all the experience I have had of our heavenly Father's kindness, and may shake them off, and begin to breathe more freely and hopefully, it is only to have them return, the moment I begin to lose myself, like the multitudinous ocean, to overwhelm me afresh."

"Oh, my brother! my poor brother! how well do I understand this form of suffering and temptation! But be of good cheer! Put your trust in the Lord — wait patiently — and there will come that perfect peace, after the trial of our faith, which Thou hast promised, O Lord! to him, whose mind is stayed on Thee!"

"I believe it, Elizabeth," said her brother, rising and slowly pacing the floor, and then stopping suddenly just in front of her, as if he had something on his mind which he wanted, but dreaded to communicate — and then taking a lamp, as if about to withdraw.

"No, no — not yet, brother George! It is too early — if you go to bed now, you will be sure of passing a sleepless night; suppose you have a cup of chocolate, and try to eat something — and then, if we can manage to sit up till the accustomed hour, the chances for a quiet sleep will be much better."

"Do, Uncle George — *do!*" said Julia, catching his hand to her lips.

"Certainly, mother — to be sure!" added Arthur, in reply to a questioning look, while he seized the other.

And then they led him back to the sofa, and seated themselves, one on each side, still keeping hold of his hands, while Arthur tilted back, with a sad, half-discouraged expression, and shut his eyes, and appeared to be going over in thought all the unpleasant occurrences of the day, for he grew suddenly pale — and then his countenance flushed — and his brow gathered blackness, and his mouth wrought, and his chin quivered, and at last, Julia, who was watching him sideways, saw a tear gathering slowly on the lashes, and she put forth her little hand, with a smile of encouragement, which he saw, as he opened his eyes at the gentle touch, and laid it lovingly upon his.

The mother saw it too, for there was no concealment; and when Julia said to him, in a low, and sweet, though mournful voice, "How is it with thee, my *brother?*" she understood her, as if her whole heart had been that instant laid open to her for the first time, and she saw nestling there, not the love that poor Arthur had been hoping for, and believing in, but the love of a sister, a dear, only sister — self-denying — unchangeable — and patient; and she gathered the poor girl up to her heart, and kissed her eyes, and her mouth, wet with tears, till Julia knew that now, at least, if never before, she was understood by the mother.

But her uncle did not appear so well satisfied. Notwithstanding the heavy shadow that had settled upon his path, he was of a nature so unselfish, that he could not bear to see a single ray of sunshine or hope turned away from hers; and he appeared for a moment rather uneasy, and then perplexed, and then disappointed.

And as for Arthur, he knew not what to think, nor which way to look, nor what to say. If all the kindness Julia had shown, — as if carried away by her feelings, and in the midst of her severest trials that day — was, after all, nothing more than sisterly kindness — then he had been self-deceived, and most cruelly, and the work of months would have to be all gone over anew;

but if, on the contrary, notwithstanding all that had happened between them before — and between her and Mr. Fay, since their alienation — it was something more, and something different, he felt as if he could throw himself upon his mother's neck, and beseech her, in the presence of Julia herself, and of his uncle George, not to give way to the delusion, however strong, that he had nothing to hope for, but the love of a sister.

Nothing was said of the trial — nor of what had happened already — nothing of what was expected on the morrow. Their hearts were too full — and after the exercises of the evening were through, and they had committed themselves to the guardianship of their heavenly Father, and cast all their burdens upon Him who hath said, "Come unto me all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest," they separated at the usual hour, with words of unspeakable tenderness, and looks of sorrowful encouragement, one for another, tranquillized and assured, and patient, for the first time, knowing that all would be finished on the morrow.

As they were parting, however, and the brother had just given to the beloved sister the good-night kiss of peace, he stopped, and setting down the lamp, took both of her hands into his, and looking mournfully into her eyes, he said, — "After I leave you to-night, my dearest of earthly treasures, I do not mean to interchange another word with you, nor with the dear children, if it can be helped, until the great question is settled — *and forever;* and therefore, what I have to say, must be said now. I have been debating with myself, hour after hour, whether I should open my mouth upon the subject to any of you — and especially to you, my dear Elizabeth — *before it was all over.*"

Julia shuddered, and Arthur saw a shade of anxiety stealing over the pale, serene forehead of his mother, as the ominous words fell slowly — one by one — like tear-drops, from the overlaboring heart of her brother.

"But I have made up my mind at last," continued he, "that you should all be prepared for whatever may happen; as I trust I shall."

"Go on, dear brother," said Aunt Elizabeth; seeing him falter, and grow pale.

"I have one question to ask — and then, a word or two of warning, and perhaps of comfort and consolation to offer."

"Well, dear brother, — why do you stop? why turn away your face? why grasp my hand with such terrible earnestness? — don't, brother, don't look at me so! you frighten me!"

"Elizabeth — answer me plainly. Is your confidence in your brother still unshaken?"

"How can you ask such a question, my dear brother?"

"Answer it, nevertheless — what say you?"

"Unshaken? — *Yes.*"

"And yours, dear Julia? — and yours, Arthur?"

Julia and Arthur looked astonished; but both answered together, — "Unshaken! — Yes!"

"And will you promise me — all of you — whatever may happen to-morrow, to believe as you do now, that I am trustworthy, and that whatever I have done — or may be obliged to do to-morrow — there is nothing for you to be ashamed of, or sorry for, in all these transactions, however they may appear for a time."

"We will! We do! We do!" they all answered together.

"One word more. If in this matter of life or death to me — and therefore indirectly to you — I should be obliged to do what I have been striving to avoid for months, and urged by the instinct of self-preservation, should be driven to what may seem strange to you — after all that has happened — may I not reckon upon your love and trust, nevertheless?"

"Certainly you may."

"And will you try to suspend your opinion — so far as it may be possible, I mean — till we have an opportunity of conferring together, face to face?"

"We will! We do!"

"Brother," said Elizabeth, "I know not — and I care as little as I know — what your plans and purposes are. I do not allow myself to be anxious or troubled, however I may appear. I ask no questions; I desire no information; for I have such absolute faith in you, such unqualified, unchangeable trust in your goodness of heart, your sound understanding, and your high religious principle" — her brother groaned aloud — "though you have

not, I see — that, happen what may, I acquit you in advance — and here — and now — of all blame, and of all unworthy purpose; and so will these dear children, I am sure."

Julia confirmed the words of her aunt with a loving kiss, and Arthur with a hearty hug, and they all betook themselves to rest.

And the long night wore away; a night of silent storm and darkness; for while the heavens were bright with multiplying stars, and the great pale moon went wandering on her way like a huge phantom, and the sea and air, and all the wonders of both were hushed into a stillness that grew oppressive and uncomfortable, there was a deep darkness within the hearts of all these watching and weary pilgrims; and so much of inward strife and turbulent sorrow, that when they got up, as they all did many times in the course of the night, and looked out upon the quiet blue of the sky, and the unchangeable stars, for some sign of life or motion, they were driven back with a feeling of utter self-abandonment and loneliness to the beds they had left. It seemed, as they all afterwards acknowledged, as if the night would never end — as if the morning would never come; all persisted in declaring that they had never passed such a night — so dreary — and so dismal — and most of them, that they had not slept a wink; and that, if they had lost themselves for a moment, it was only to be scared by dreams, till they were obliged to spring out of bed, and run to the window, and look out upon the substantial things of earth, silent and shadowy though they were, to satisfy themselves that they were yet in the land of the living, and that the stars were not stayed in their courses, nor the great moon delayed most unreasonably, on her everlasting errand of peace.

But the dreary night did go by, and the tardy morning did appear; and the spectres vanished — and the heavy clouds were lifted — and the sunshine broke forth anew, with the song of birds — and the chirping and twittering of sparrows and swallows; and when the family appeared at breakfast, though unrefreshed with sleep, and pale, and slow in all their movements, and in no humor for talking, there was an evident change for the better, in the look of their eyes — a something of holy trust, if not of cheerful expectation.

They had been told to appear early in court; and their early breakfast was needed, and what was more, enjoyed. Instead of being played with, and then sent away untasted — it was received with thankfulness, and brought with it a refreshing sense of God's goodness to the children of sorrow; and being ended, no time was lost — so that, half an hour before they were wanted, Fay found the whole party assembled at the appointed place of meeting — with Mr. Bayard, Miss Wentworth, Miss Webb, and Miss Archibald, waiting for them.

"Whom do you call first, my dear Sir?" asked Mr. Fay, turning as he spoke to "friend William." "I leave this part of the case wholly with you — taking it for granted that you have your reasons, good and sufficient, for keeping us all in the dark."

"Well, Winthrop — thee does me, I think, no more than justice; and after we are through, I hope to hear thee acknowledge that I could not well have done otherwise. When thee has finished thy opening, I propose to call our young friend Arthur to the stand."

"Ah! — then hadn't you better step with him into the lobby, or into some by-place, and prepare him for what he may be required to show?"

Friend William smiled; and nodding to Arthur, he said, "give thyself no uneasiness, Winthrop, — we understand each other pretty well, I think."

"Up to a certain point, perfectly," said Arthur; "but beyond that, I am all at sea."

"Well, well, my young friend; all in good time — these mysteries have their use, in what are called courts of justice, if nowhere else — and as I never let the cat out of the bag till she is wanted — nor ever jump till I come to the stile, ——"

"Why, my excellent friend! what spirits you are in, to be sure!" said Mr. Fay. "Upon my word, I begin to feel quite encouraged."

"*Begin* to feel encouraged, Winthrop! Why, what am I to understand by that, after all the confidence we have heard thee express in the final issue?"

"In the final issue, when the questions of law have to be argued before a full bench, I grant you; but here — and just now

— and before the jury, when you do not allow me to see an inch beyond my nose — I cannot say that I do not need some encouragement."

"Well, well, take it then — for it is my belief, Winthrop Fay, that no such thing as a law question will ever go up to a full bench in this case; and that here — even here — and before the jury, thy client will be safe."

"I know you feel sure, my excellent friend; but — remember — there's many a slip 'twixt the cup and the lip."

Friend William replied with a shake of his white hair, and a benevolent smile, which warmed the heart of young Maynard, like living sunshine, and appeared to have a charming effect upon his mother and Julia, if not upon his uncle, who stood aloof, without hearing the conversation, and appeared lost in thought.

An officer now presented himself at the door, and the name of Mr. Fay was called.

"Come," said the counsellor — "we are wanted. Mr. Officer, oblige me by seeing that all these ladies are provided with convenient places for seeing, as well as hearing; and Mr. Maynard, as you are to be the first witness called by my coadjutor" — nodding to Mr. Bayard — "I must beg of you not to be out of the way."

As they entered the court-room, they heard the case called; and in reply to a question from the bench, and another from the government, Mr. Fay having answered that he was ready, opened forthwith, and without a sign of trepidation, hurry, or uneasiness.

After thanking the jury for their patience, and complimenting the bench, for the indulgent courtesy they had experienced, he entered upon the defence, by admitting all that had been charged by the prosecution, — acknowledging, at the same time, that if he had done so at first, as advised by a gentleman of large experience in legal procedure, both at home and abroad — the gentleman sitting by his side — here all eyes were turned upon the venerable Quaker — it would have greatly abridged the labor, and saved the time of the court, and might have been of no real disadvantage to his client; although, to be sure, some facts had been brought out upon the cross-examination, which might

not otherwise have appeared — unless by recalling the witnesses.

Having now prepared the way, and secured the attention of all within hearing, he entered upon the past life and character of the party charged, saying that if needful in his judgment, he should put them both in issue before he got through. And here, after glancing at the newspaper stories which had been so widely circulated to the disadvantage of his client — excusing some of the writers, while he charged others with wanton cruelty and gross exaggeration, and wilful and long continued, if not malicious misrepresentation — he rose to a lofty and serious, though unimpassioned style of eloquence, deeply moving to all, so that before he had finished this part of his opening, there were wet lashes all about him, and Julia sat with clasped hands, looking him straight in the face, and hardly breathing, while the bright, large tears ran down to her lips, and fell upon the black velvet she wore, and glittered like overgrown seed pearls, or spattered quicksilver; and Miss Wentworth and Sallie, her niece, not only wept, but sobbed, while, with their eyes fixed upon the lofty, pale face of the "unfortunate gentleman," as Mr. Fay called the Major, they listened to the simple and touching story of his life.

"And now, gentlemen of the jury — now that I have prepared you in a measure for a right understanding of this high-minded gentleman's true character, you will not be astonished to find, that, from the very first hour when the charge was made, up to this, there has never been a moment when he might not have completely vindicated himself, and proved his innocence — if, — mark me, gentlemen! and hold me to the proof hereafter, I pray you — absolute and incontrovertible *proof* — *if*, I say — *if* he would have consented to involve another, not here to answer for himself."

Here Julia turned suddenly away, and catching at Arthur's hand, who sat nearest, she dropped her veil, as if — poor thing — as if that other person so mysteriously alluded to by Mr. Fay, could be no other than the absent Charles.

"But there are limits to self-sacrifice," continued Mr. Fay — "and although my client is fully persuaded that the party in

question is not blameworthy, and that, in some way — he knows not how — has been egregiously duped, all which he might show if he were living, ——"

"*If living!*" whispered Julia, "God of all mercy! what does he mean!"

"Hush, hush!" whispered Arthur, and her uncle made a sign to her, which went to her heart like an arrow.

"And, therefore it is," continued Mr. Fay, "that he has been waiting, month after month, in the hope of being able to show, not only that he himself is not blameworthy, but that the friend, — the dearest friend he once had on earth — was equally innocent. But, gentlemen of the jury, he can wait no longer. His health is suffering — his very reason totters — and though we might have obtained further delay, not being in my judgment ready for trial, on account of the absence of material witnesses, who are soon to be here, and whom we have used the greatest diligence to obtain, still, we have concluded to come before you with the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, and take the consequences."

Here the sobbing had become pretty general, and the whispering troublesome; Mrs. Maynard's veil was down — Mrs. Archibald's — Julia's — Miss Wentworth's, and all but Miss Webb's. That reference to the dearest friend he once had on earth — to one that was out of the way now, and no longer able to answer for himself — to him who, if he were alive, might be able to justify himself — had completely overwhelmed the whole party, and set Arthur wondering, and his mother trembling, and Julia weeping, they knew not why.

The prosecutor seemed greatly disturbed; and seeing the accused cover his face with his hands, and lean forward with both elbows on the table — his broad chest heaving, and his whole frame shaking as with a tempest of inward emotion — a struggle for life or death — as the eloquent gentleman dwelt upon his high character, and past life — upon his unselfishness — and above all, upon his patient forbearance, under overwhelming, though undeserved reproach, and his great unwillingness to protect himself, even at the last hour, by the introduction of most conclusive and unquestionable evidence, which had been in his

possession from the first, and might have been produced at any time, lest the character of a dear friend, no longer upon earth — a man of the highest principle, and of unblemished reputation — might suffer for a season, he began to look about him among his brethren of the bar, and up at the bench for something of encouragement, instead of what he saw in the countenances of all, a deep and growing sympathy for the accused, and heartfelt commiseration for the weeping women of the family.

The room had never been so thronged, nor so still. There was no shuffling of the feet — no whispering — and the breathless attention of all was continued, until Mr. Fay finished, with a burst of natural earnestness, and solemn pathos, which had never been surpassed even there, in that chamber of power.

"Call your witnesses, Mr. Fay," said the judge.

"Arthur Maynard! — I pray your honor that this witness may be sworn."

"What!" suggested the judge — "only one at a time — wouldn't it be better to have them all sworn at once?"

"We know not how many may be needed, your honor, and I want to save the time of the court ——"

The prosecutor smiled, and glanced at the judge.

"And although," continued Mr. Fay, "I have another at my elbow, whom I may be obliged to call, as he is a member of the Society of Friends, and conscientiously scrupulous about taking an oath, no time would be saved by administering the affirmation now."

Arthur stood up — looking very calm and serious, though very youthful, and there was a low murmur of approbation, growing louder and louder, about the bar, and a rustle of drapery among the female witnesses, distinctly audible to the prosecutor.

"Hold up your hand, Sir!" said the clerk, with a voice of authority. Arthur obeyed.

"Please take the stand, Sir," said Mr. Fay, as soon as the oath was administered.

The rustling of papers, and a low whispering, followed — and there was a moment of breathless anxiety, as Mr. Fay handed a large sealed parcel to the prosecutor, begging him to satisfy him-

self whether it had ever been tampered with, before he offered it to the witness.

"What is it, Sir?" said the prosecutor, "and with what view is it offered?"

"Please look at the seal and see if it appears to have been meddled with — and then I shall desire the witness to open the parcel; after which, and before it is read to the jury, it shall be put into your hands, and then if our purpose be not sufficiently clear, I shall endeavor to make it so."

"The seal appears to be unbroken, Sir — and so far as I can judge, the parcel does not appear to have been tampered with," said the prosecutor, handing it toward the witness, with an air of great indifference ——

"No, no, excuse me," said Mr. Fay, — "before the parcel is opened, I desire the court and jury to be satisfied."

The judge took the parcel, and after a thorough examination, passed it to the clerk, who handed it over to the foreman.

After the jury had satisfied themselves, and signified their opinion by a look, which was well understood by the judge, who assented, with a very thoughtful air — the packet was put into Arthur's trembling hand.

"Please look at the handwriting of the address, and tell me if you are acquainted with it?" said Mr. Fay.

Arthur grew paler and paler, as he fixed his eyes upon the writing — trembled — and gasped for breath — and clutched at the hand-railing, as if seized with a sudden faintness.

"Well, Sir," continued Mr. Fay, after waiting for him to recover — and lowering his voice to a sort of stage-whisper, which filled the house, nevertheless, "what say you?"

"It is the handwriting of my father, Sir."

In the dread stillness that followed, a faint scream was heard, with the rustle of women's garments, gathering hurriedly about Mrs. Maynard.

"Are you satisfied of the fact? I assume that you are well acquainted with your father's handwriting; that you have seen him write, and have had letters from him, but unless the government require it, I shall pass over all such preliminary questions, and come directly to the point."

"My learned brother will proceed in his own way," said the prosecutor; "I waive all objections for the present."

"Well, Mr. Maynard,—I ask you if you are satisfied, after the examination you have made, that the handwriting you find there is that of your father?"

"I am, Sir" — almost choking.

"When did you last see that parcel? — or rather — for I see the government is prepared to object — have you any recollection of ever having seen that parcel before?"

"Never, to my knowledge."

"Please look at the seal, and say if you are acquainted with it? and whose it is, if you know?"

"I am, Sir — it was the seal of my father."

"Did he often use it?"

"Almost always — in sealing important papers, always."

"Will you be so obliging as to examine the seal, and see if it appears to have been meddled with?"

"I think it has not been meddled with, Sir."

"Your father is not living, I believe?"

"No, Sir," said Arthur, beginning to recover himself and breathe more freely.

"When did he die?"

"Eighteen months ago — *this very day.*"

"Do me the favor to open that parcel now, and see what it contains."

Arthur broke the seal; and after tearing off another envelope, he answered with a voice that thrilled every heart, while his hand shook, as with a palsy — "It appears to be a list of a — of a ——"

"Stop there, if you please. I desire the government may have nothing to complain of. Pass the papers to the prosecutor, if you please, Mr. Officer."

The prosecutor took them — puzzled over them awhile — turned them inside out — glanced at the backs, and then, as he handed them to Mr. Fay, he observed, that "inasmuch as he did not well understand why they were introduced, he should make no objection, till that appeared; but would allow them to go into the hands of the witness at present, though not to the jury, with

the understanding that if they should appear irrelevant, or improper, in the progress of examination, they should be ruled out."

Mr. Fay bowed — and the judge assented.

"Do you know this handwriting?" continued Mr. Fay, stepping toward the witness-box, and holding up to Arthur and the jury, a long paper, closely written, and covered with columns of figures.

"Yes."

"And whose do you say it is?"

"The papers are all in the handwriting of my cousin Charles Parry."

The Major started, and looked up, in amazement; and Julia drew closer the thick veil about her face and leaned back upon the shoulder of her aunt Elizabeth, and waited for the issue, as for judgment of death.

"Are you well acquainted with his handwriting?"

"Perfectly — we were brought up together."

"And whose signatures are these I find at the bottom?"

"They are his and mine — and this, you see here, is my father's. We were called in as witnesses."

"Have you any recollection of the circumstances attending this transaction?"

"Yes — I remember them all now, as if they had happened but yesterday."

"Please turn toward the jury, and state them in the order they occur to you, and in your own way, without being questioned."

Arthur trembled from head to foot — and while he foresaw the terrible consequences — and felt the solid earth giving way underneath his feet, and a great gulf opening, yet he persisted, and shutting his eyes to the danger, and breathing a silent prayer, that he might be strengthened for the work before him, and that his faith might fail not — seeing at the same time that his mother and Julia were both praying with him, and for him — for their hands were clasped and their heads bowed — and that his dear uncle had his calm steady eyes fixed upon him, full of encouragement and hope, and warning and sorrow, he answered, —

"It was a little time before my father's death — about a month,

I see by the date here. My cousin Charles and I were called out of bed, to compare the list I hold here, with the numbers and dates of certain Bank of England notes lying upon the table. The list had been made out before."

"Well — did you compare them?"

"We did."

"How did you manage? and what was the result?"

"We compared the whole, note by note; and having found them all correct, my father asked us to verify the list, and affix our signatures as witnesses, and then to see them enclosed."

There was a sound here, as of a low half-smothered wailing — a moan of broken-hearted, hopeless misery. Poor Arthur was afraid to look that way — or even to move — and expected every moment to hear that somebody was carried off into the open air, — either his mother or Julia — and he longed to cry out, with a voice of agony, throw up the windows! but still he forbore — and God strengthened him.

"Did you see them enclosed?" continued Mr. Fay.

"I did, Sir."

"Did you see the seal affixed?"

"I did, Sir."

"And the address written?"

"No, Sir; when we left the parcel in the hands of my father, as I have stated, there was no address on it."

"Did he say for whom it was intended — either then, or afterward?"

"Never to me, Sir."

"To anybody else? — within your knowledge?"

"Never, to my knowledge."

"Did you at the time know for whom the parcel was intended? Or have you in any way since, come to that knowledge?"

"No, Sir."

"You may take the witness, Mr. Attorney."

"Thank you for nothing," said the prosecutor. "I do not well see what these papers have to do with the case, your honor, and I might well object, if it were not for losing more time than we should save."

"Allow me to explain," said Mr. Fay. "My brother misunderstands our purpose. The forged notes being brought home to the possession of my client, beyond all controversy — our object, as the court will see, if Mr. Attorney does not, is to account for that possession."

"Any questions for the witness, Mr. Attorney?" said the judge.

"Not a question," your honor.

"The witness may step down," said the judge, rising as he spoke, and withdrawing. "Be prepared to call your next witness on my return," he added, as he passed out.

Arthur left the stand with a cheerful and assured look; and but for Mr. Fay, would have taken the hand of his uncle in passing; but that wary gentleman, who appeared to be always on the watch, interposed, just in time.

Arthur understood the look, and obeyed the touch upon his elbow, and passed on with a low bow toward a group of mourning women, who were huddled away, just within the door of an adjoining room, and clinging together very much as if they had all but just escaped from shipwreck, and been washed ashore by a miracle. They must have heard his step — they may have felt his approach — but nobody spoke — nobody moved — nobody looked up — and there was nothing to show that he was understood, but a low subdued murmuring, and the silent pressure of hand after hand, followed by the rustling of black veils, and a slight change of position, as they sat closer and closer together, Julia leaning her head upon the shoulder of her aunt Elizabeth, and something shadowy, whose face could not be seen through the encumbering drapery, and whose shape could not be guessed at, clinging to Julia; and Charles standing sentry over them.

CHAPTER XXII.

THE judge reappeared after a few minutes.

"Call your next witness, Mr. Fay," said he, as he seated himself. "It would be very desirable to have this matter finished to-day."

The remark was well-received by the prosecutor — by the bar — and even by Mr. Fay himself — though it was understood by no two persons alike, perhaps.

"Mr. Bayard, will you please take the stand," said Mr. Fay.

Friend William arose without uncovering, and faced the crowd. All eyes were turned toward him, with a look of wonder and pleasure. The benevolent repose — the serene, hopeful, earnest, intelligent look of the venerable Quaker, with his abundant white hair, and gentle gravity, appeared to prepossess all hearts in his favor, and to prepare the way for a kindlier judgment of the prisoner himself.

"Take off your hat, Sir, if you please, and hold up your hand," said the clerk.

"Thee'll excuse me, I hope," said the witness, appealing with a significant look, to the bench.

The judge interfered with a smile, such as had not been seen upon his face before; and the clerk, who, as it happened, being a new comer, had never been fairly confronted in a court of justice with a resolute follower of George Fox, gave up the oath, and consented to take the affirmation of the witness, "under the pains and penalties of perjury," without more ado.

"God bless him!" cried Miss Wentworth, from the midst of a group of listening and trembling women, just loud enough to reach the ear of the judge, who held up his hand in rebuke, as friend William prepared to take the stand.

"Mr. Bayard may give his testimony from the place he has been occupying at the table," suggested the prosecutor.

"The witness will be better heard by the jury where he is, I think," replied Mr. Fay.

"But perhaps he would like a chair," continued the prosecutor, determined to prepossess the witness if he could — "Mr. Officer, hand a chair to the gentleman, if you please."

"No, I thank thee," said the witness, nodding to the prosecutor, and pushing away the offered chair, and glancing at the judge, whose countenance underwent a sudden change just then, as if he had that moment, and for the first time, recognized in William Bayard, an old acquaintance. It was even so; in their boyhood, they had been much together, and in their early manhood, when both were fashionable, and rather *fast*, they had occasionally met, in Philadelphia and Baltimore, and then lost sight of each other, as if the earth had opened and swallowed them both up. The judge was the younger looking man — though somewhat older in fact — and each seemed astonished at the appearance of the other — and then a look of earnest recognition passed between them, and they were both carried back to the days of their boyhood again, and both left wondering at themselves, that they should not have instantly known each other "at sight."

At this moment, and just as Mr. Fay was about propounding the first question, with all eyes upon him, an officer in attendance pushed through the crowd, and gave the witness a folded paper.

The good man having run over it, appeared greatly moved. He lifted his eyes, and half raised his locked hands, while the prosecutor frowned, the judge looked somewhat displeased, and even Mr. Fay — the imperturbable Mr. Fay — who up to this moment, had borne himself with unchangeable serenity, showed signs of uneasiness.

"The counsel for the prisoner," said the judge, with a serious, and somewhat peremptory air, "will proceed."

"Maybe thee'd better look at this paper first, friend Winthrop," said the witness, handing it over to him.

Mr. Fay took the paper with a show of unwillingness, and a look of impatience; but instantly recovered himself — and

casting his eye over it — his countenance changed, and he underwent a sort of transfiguration, as if a great burden had been suddenly lifted from his heart, or a heavy cloud from his pathway. The change was so abrupt, and so startling, even to those who knew him best, that when he turned to the bench and begged to be excused for a few moments — and then to the witness, praying him to be seated — there was a stirring and whispering over the whole house — growing louder and louder, and more and more portentous, like a rising wind in the tops of the trees, till the judge found it necessary to interfere.

That no time should be lost, however, he had no sooner quelled the whispering, and assented to Mr. Fay's request, than he ordered the docket to be called, and in that off-hand, business-like way which had always distinguished him, notified the parties in no less than five different cases, to be prepared for trial.

Here was another symptom — and in the judgment of the older practitioners, a very favorable symptom; for however the prosecution and the defence might differ in their interpretation of looks, or of words let fall from the bench as *obiter dicta*, one thing was now clear to both — and to all — and that was, that the judge himself had begun to see the end of the case, whatever the end might be.

Mr. Fay returned with a countenance no longer illuminated, as with inward light, and assured promise, but rigid as death, and very pale. There was evidently a crisis at hand.

"Call your witness, Mr. Fay," said the judge. "We have no time to lose."

"Your honor will pardon me — but another witness we have long been waiting for, and hoping for, has but just arrived, and with submission, we should like to call him first. Mr. Officer, call Charles Parry."

The Major started up from his chair, and seemed utterly amazed — Mr. Bayard overjoyed — and a faint scream from Julia, showed that while Arthur stood as if thunderstruck, she was so far mistress of herself, as to understand what was meant, and feel in a measure prepared for the apparition.

"Charles Parry! Charles Parry! — pass the word there!" shouted the officer; "Charles Parry!" and the cry was repeated,

and went echoing and reëchoing through the vaulted passages and crowded antechambers, in the deathlike stillness that followed, like a summons from another world, as Julia cast herself into the arms of her aunt Elizabeth, and Arthur knelt before his mother, and took both her hands into his; and there they all sat, holding their breath, and waiting in speechless expectation, with their eyes all fixed upon the large doors.

At last, a heavy trampling was heard afar off — the crowd began to surge away from the chief entrance — a strong peremptory tread came nearer and nearer, sounding like a threat — and a pale, haughty face appeared, with a prodigious quantity of black hair flowing away from it, like the shadow of death — head and shoulders above all that were nigh, like Saul among the princes of Israel; and lo! Charles Parry — the loved and lost — came forward, with a large, heavy book under his arm, such as you see in banking-houses, and making his way up to the table where his uncle stood waiting his approach, as if expecting a message from the departed.

"Uncle George!" said he, offering both hands, with the straightforward manliness and simplicity which had always characterized him in the day of his strength, "I have wronged you! forgive me! This is no time — no place — for explanations; but hereafter" — and then, stopping abruptly, he turned to Mr. Bayard, who sat eyeing him with evident surprise and pleasure, and said to him, so as to be heard by all the by-standers, and court and jury, "I could not come before — but I have lost no time, I assure you. Here is the book you wanted — and now, I am ready to answer all your questions — whatever they may be."

Mr. Fay was not a little astonished; the judge looked puzzled — and the white-headed conventionalities below, stared; but calm and self-possessed, and wholly unmoved by the bustle he had occasioned, and the questioning looks of the bar, the new witness continued standing, and facing the crowd, as if to satisfy himself — and them — that he was where he had a right to be, and well prepared for whatever might happen, and no longer liable to be misunderstood or misrepresented, till Mr. Bayard whispered to Mr. Fay — and Mr. Fay answered with a smile,

"certainly, if you insist upon it — I leave it wholly with you;" and then, "may it please the court," he added in the next breath, "I pray the witness may be sworn."

"Let the witness be sworn," said the judge.

The oath being administered, Charles took the stand, carrying the large book with him.

"What book have you there?" said Mr. Fay.

"A book of entries belonging to my late uncle Harper Maynard, of the house of Maynard & Co., of London."

"How came it in your possession?"

"I found it among other books, in Philadelphia, where most of them were left on our first arrival here, last October."

"Please look at this paper," continued Mr. Fay, holding up the list of bank-notes already testified to by Arthur, "and tell us, if you have any recollection of having seen it before."

"Yes, I have. It is all in my own handwriting — and this," touching the bottom of a page with his forefinger, "is my signature; and this my uncle's, and this my cousin Arthur's."

"Please detail the circumstances under which the list was made out."

The witness began, as Arthur did, at the beginning; and went over the whole ground, step by step, corroborating him throughout, until he happened to say something which made the older practitioners prick up their ears — the judge lean forward — Mr. Fay clutch Mr. Bayard's wrist — and the Major hold his breath.

"Please repeat that," said the prosecutor — "I want to have it down in the very words of the witness."

"Repeat what, Sir?"

"What you just said about your being with your late uncle, at the time he received the parcel."

"I was with him, Sir. It was handed to him in my presence, with a letter, just as we rose from dinner. My uncle made a sign for me to follow him; and we went together into a little private room he had reserved for himself, when he had business to do out of banking hours; and there he opened the parcel in my presence — and we examined the notes together, and compared them with a list that accompanied them; and after we

had got through, he said to me that Arthur and I would both be wanted very early on the morrow, or perhaps during the night; as he must have another list made out by me, and verified by both of us."

"Well, Sir — what followed?"

"After this, he requested me to enter the notes with the marks and numbers in this book."

"What do you call that book, Sir?"

"A book of entries — or memorandum-book. We have no proper name for it in our business."

"A blotter, perhaps? — or day-book? — or journal?"

"No, Sir. It is not one of a series, or set of books, and never appears in our system of bookkeeping."

"I do not see the pertinency of all this," muttered the judge.

"Nor I neither," said the prosecutor, smiling significantly.

Mr. Fay bowed to the bench, and then proceeded with the examination.

"If such a book were to disappear, would it, or would it not, be missed by the bookkeeper of your establishment?"

"It would not. The bookkeepers have nothing to do with it, any more than with a private memorandum-book, or letter-book."

"Well, Mr. Parry — did you enter these bank-notes, with their numbers and marks, in that book, as you were desired to do? or did you not?"

"I did, Sir — I copied into the book the list that came with it."

"Do you find it there now, Sir?"

"I do" — opening the huge folio, and showing two closely-written pages, with double columns.

"Be so obliging as to compare the list you hold in your hand, so far as to see if it corresponds with the entries you find there."

"I have done so," said the witness, after running his eye over both, like one familiar with such operations, "and they appear to be alike."

"And you swear that the entries in the book were made by yourself?"

"They were."

"But when, if you please?"

"That very night, Sir; — you will find the date here — it was all done before I slept."

"Was the other list you mentioned made out before you slept?" asked the government.

Mr. Fay smiled — but said nothing; not even so much as "After we have done with the witness, if you please," — or, "he is my witness now, Sir."

"No, Sir. The list I hold in my hand was made out some hours later. We were called out of bed, I remember."

"Was it so very urgent?" continued the prosecutor, in a low voice.

"My learned brother will excuse me," said Mr. Fay, — "but really — if he has no objection, I should like to pursue the inquiry, without his help, for a few minutes longer."

"Such interruptions are highly improper," said the judge. "Go on with your witness, Mr. Fay."

"Well, Sir — I desire to know whether you have any knowledge now, or ever had, of the party from whom these Bank of England notes, of which we have now two separate lists, were obtained?"

A long pause — a long, half-smothered whispering — and a minute or two of breathless silence followed, as the witness appeared to be recollecting himself.

"No, Sir, — never," he answered, after a short and severe inward struggle. I had not then — nor have I had since, any knowledge upon the subject. All that I know is but hearsay — or supposition."

"You need not state any hearsay," said the prosecutor; "and we do not want any of your *suppositions*."

Charles turned slowly upon the prosecutor, without speaking, and he quailed. Long accustomed to the tricks of the trade — brow-beating and badgering witnesses, whenever they stood in his way — he was quite unprepared for what seemed to be brewing with the high-spirited and serious, though somewhat unmanageable young man before him.

Mr. Fay did not interfere — he saw the look, and felt satisfied that he had nothing to apprehend for the witness.

"Do me the favor now, Sir — Mr. Attorney, I will trouble

you for the burnt notes you have there — to look at these fragments, and see if they correspond with the entries in that book."

The witness, after a careful comparison, which occupied five minutes or so, during which time the eagerness of look, and the earnest watchfulness of the bar, and the deep, deathlike stillness of the multitude were enough to show that they all regarded the coming answer as — to say the least of it, exceedingly momentous, if not conclusive, drew a long breath and replied —

"Yes, Sir — I find them all here; and the marks, numbers and amounts correspond throughout."

"Now be so obliging, Sir, as to look at this printed list — furnished by the Bank of England, as Mr. Attorney has proved, and scattered all over Europe and America, and see if these burnt notes are to be found there?"

"All, Sir — every one," said the witness. "The numbers being consecutive, they are easily compared."

"Do you find any others upon the list furnished by the Bank of England — which are to be found also on the list you made out for your uncle Maynard?"

"Yes — a large number."

"Please mention their marks and amounts."

Charles did so, and the judge compared a printed list, which had been furnished him for the purpose, with the entries read over by the witness.

"And what was the sum total of these bank-notes? — they are added up, I believe."

"The sum total — where?"

"In the book you hold in your hand — or in the list you made out?"

"Both are alike, Sir. The sum total is just twenty thousand pounds."

"The sum total of the list your honor holds there, issued by the Bank of England, I believe, is larger?"

"Nearly a hundred thousand pounds — if I have added them correctly," said the prosecutor.

"One question more, and you may take the witness. Do you know, on what conditions, or terms, the notes in question were lodged with Maynard & Co.?"

"No, Sir, — nothing beyond what I heard my uncle say at the time."

"Stop there, if you please."

"I object!" said the prosecutor.

"My learned brother," said Mr. Fay, "is in somewhat of a hurry with his objection; but, I will not take up the time of the court just now; hereafter I may have to present the question in another shape. You may take the witness now, Mr. Attorney."

A sharp and vigorous onset, with a long-continued, and very troublesome cross-examination followed; but with no advantage to the prosecution.

"Call your next witness!" said the judge — beginning to show signs of weariness, if not of impatience, under the tiresome repetition of queries, which had been answered over and over again, and which amounted to little or nothing, after all.

"Mr. Bayard — please take the stand," — said Mr. Fay.

The venerable man stood up without uncovering, and calmly surveyed the listening crowd, while the last witness, having caught a view of what was going forward in the nearest room, stole away — and though he went on tiptoe, and a slight scream followed, with a deal of rustling and shuffling, it was clear that he took nobody by surprise — not even Julia — nor Mrs. Archibald — nor a heap of shawls by her side on the bench, though it heaved, and shook, and trembled, and sobbed, and at last jumped about his neck with a cry of joy that thrilled every heart within hearing, and obliged the officer to shut the door, and lift up his forefinger and cry, "hush!" But there were too many eavesdroppers — and by-standers — and listeners — to allow the manifestations of a long-hoarded love, brotherly or otherwise, to continue; and so, Julia took one of his hands — the little wee thing another — while Aunt Elizabeth and Mrs. Archibald threw their arms round his neck — and Arthur jumped about the room like a distracted creature — and Sallie Webb pushed open the door, and thrust forward her wonderful face, all streaming with tears, and called upon Aunt Marie and the others to hush up, and not make fools of themselves — for Mr. Bayard was undergoing examination; and if they knew when they were well off, they would come

to their senses directly, and try to behave like reasonable creatures — before it was too late."

"Hush yourself, child!" said Miss Wentworth. How can we hope to hear a word they say, if you keep up such a confounded racket?"

The deep stillness that followed was broken at last by Mr. Fay: —

"Will you be so obliging as to state," said he, "whether you were acquainted with the late Harper Maynard, of the house of Maynard & Co., London?"

"Yes."

"And for how long a time?"

"From his boyhood, up to within a few months of his death."

"Were you in correspondence with him at any time?"

"Always, when we were at a distance from each other."

"When was your last communication with him?"

"I do not understand thee; by letter or otherwise?"

"When did you last receive a communication from him?"

"About six months ago."

"About six months ago!" exclaimed the prosecutor, "why the man has been dead eighteen months, if the other witnesses are to be believed!"

"If my learned brother will bear with me, a few moments, he will be satisfied upon this point," said Mr. Fay.

"Under what circumstances, Mr. Bayard, was that communication received?"

"I was travelling on the Continent, and it had followed me month after month, and was finally lodged with my bankers, at Paris, and after my return, forwarded to me at Philadelphia."

"Have you that communication with you?"

"I have — here it is," — holding up a large mourning envelope, with three black seals, and covered with foreign postage stamps.

"Were the seals unbroken, when you received it?"

"They were."

"Did you break the seals yourself?"

"I did."

"What did the envelope contain?"

"These two papers," holding up what appeared to be a large balance sheet, with one hand — open — so as to show long columns of figures, and in the other a closely written page of manuscript, with the look of a business letter, compact and brief.

"Are you acquainted with the handwriting of these papers?"

"With the handwriting of this," holding up the letter, — "I am well acquainted; with the other, I am not."

"And whose handwriting do you say it is?"

"Harper Maynard's."

"I observe two signatures at the bottom of the other paper. Are you acquainted with the writing, or with the parties?"

"No — they were strangers to me until within a few months, and seem to be witnesses."

"Will you please to read the names?"

"I must object to the course of examination by the counsel for the defence — I must, indeed," said the prosecutor, rising and pushing back his chair. "Not having seen the papers — and not knowing why they are introduced, I can do no more at present than object to them, till my learned brother chooses to explain himself."

"One moment, if my brother will excuse me," said Mr. Fay; "I do not propose to offer these papers in evidence, without first giving him an opportunity to examine them, nor without acknowledging my purpose; but the question just now, is, whether the witness shall be allowed to read the names of the persons who appear to have signed as attesting or subscribing witnesses."

"What is your objection, Mr. Attorney?" asked the judge.

"Well — as the answer can amount to nothing, so far as I see, I withdraw my objection."

"The witness will answer," said the judge.

"The names are Charles Parry and Arthur Maynard."

Great sensation and whispering followed; and both Charles and Arthur appeared for a moment in consultation together, just inside of the witness-room.

"Are you acquainted with any persons of the name?"

"Yes."

"Are they to be found?"

"Yes."

"Where do they live?"

"There are two persons bearing these names now in this court — one of whom, Arthur Maynard, lives in Brooklyn, Long Island, the other has just arrived from Nicaragua. There they stand, now."

"But," said the prosecutor, with a sarcastic bow — "you are unacquainted with their handwriting — and have not known the parties themselves, till within a few months?"

"Very true, John — all very true, to the best of my knowledge and belief."

"That will do, Mr. Bayard. You may leave the stand, or be seated for a few minutes, while I state, very briefly, what I now propose to offer."

"May it please your honor," said he, after a short pause, and looking about, as if to secure the undivided attention of all within hearing, "we propose to show by the witness now under examination, that the forged notes which my client is charged with uttering, and some of which were found in his possession — or traced home to him, as we cheerfully acknowledge, were deposited with him by a third party, and in good faith, under certain conditions, which will appear by his own written acknowledgment, duly witnessed, and by a list of the notes in question, and corresponding in every particular with the list your honor now holds; and thereby to show, not only that my client, Major Pendleton, is altogether blameless in the transaction, but that the individual who lodged them with him, for certain purposes, was himself an innocent holder."

In the midst of the profound sensation that followed, and before the sudden change of look had passed off, which the startling annunciation caused in all the faces about him, the prosecutor got up and argued vehemently, and very much to the purpose, against the introduction of such testimony — as improper, irrelevant, inadmissible — and contrary to the settled practice of all the courts, and to the best-established principles of law, &c. &c. &c.

Mr. Fay replied briefly and calmly; urging, that inasmuch as the party who had written the paper was no longer alive, and as

if he were alive, there could be no question about his admissibility for the defence, there was no violation of principle, so far as he could see, in allowing his written declarations to be read, corroborated as they were by circumstances, and fortified as they were by the testimony of living witnesses upon the stand."

"Declarations not under oath, your honor!" exclaimed the prosecutor, springing to his feet, growing very red in the face, and speaking with such hurried impetuosity as to be almost unintelligible — "declarations not under oath! — testimony which has never been subjected to a cross-examination!"

"As the declarations offered, may it please the court, are in the nature of acknowledgments or admissions by a third party, which go to criminate himself, until explained and corroborated — I do not see, I confess, how an oath would strengthen them — or why, if a man who comes into open court pleads guilty to an offence, which another happens to be charged with, he needs to be cross-examined, or to add a voluntary affidavit."

The judge smiled and shook his head.

"The paper," continued Mr. Fay, "was written long before the death of Mr. Maynard — and, your honor will observe, to a third party, and not in contemplation of a trial at law."

"How does that appear?" said the judge.

For a moment — a single moment, Mr. Fay appeared to be taken aback, but he instantly recovered himself, and bowing to the court, he added, "It does *not* appear — I acknowledge it, your honor — but then, I submit that the contrary does not appear, and that although the witness 'being dead yet speaketh,' there is no appearance whatever of getting up a defence; for if untrue, it would have been fatal to the writer, while he was living, and how could he foresee his own death before such evidence would be called for?"

After some consideration, the judge said, — "Although I have some doubts, and even serious doubts, for to my mind a new principle is involved, and the question seems to be whether the admissions of a third party may be shown by the party charged, — under oath or not — cross-examined or not — written or oral — yet, considering what has already appeared, and what the consequences may be to the party charged, if the testimony should be

ruled out, I think it better, on the whole, to have the facts appear. The counsel for the prisoner will proceed with the witness."

The whispering all died away. Mr. Bayard went back to the stand, the prosecutor fastened his eyes on him, and Mr. Fay — turning toward the bench said, "the letter we propose to offer has not yet been put into the hands of the government ——"

"No matter, Sir — let the witness read it," said the prosecutor.

Meanwhile the interest had become so general and so intense, that you might have heard a pin drop, anywhere, in that large room. All eyes were turned to the witness-box — and when, for the first time, the prisoner began to tremble and clutch at the back of a chair — and when they saw him rise up and steal away toward the room where the witnesses for the defence were gathered, some with their faces to the wall — others linked hand in hand — Arthur standing over his mother, and all so deeply moved, that their laborious breathing and occasional sobbing might be heard by the court and jury — and seat himself by the side of his poor sister, and draw her up to his manly bosom with a convulsive pressure — while Arthur and Charles, after shaking hands with each other, as if they had both been tried for their lives and acquitted, turned away their faces from the eager gaze of the multitude, and appeared to tremble from head to foot — and Julia locked her hands upon the shoulder of her aunt Elizabeth — and little Edith cuddled up to her, sobbing as if her heart would break, and Miss Wentworth and her niece held their handkerchiefs to their eyes — and all were waiting in breathless expectation for the letter to be read — there was in most of the countenances round about, signs not to be misunderstood, of deep sympathy and commiseration — so that the prosecutor himself appeared to be moved, and the judge wiped his glasses two or three times, and adjusted them as often, before he could see clearly.

"You may read the letter now, if you please, Mr. Bayard," said Mr. Fay. Whereupon he read as follows: —

"To William Bayard, Esquire.

"My dear Friend. Not knowing where this may find you, I shall send triplicates.

"My health is failing, and I have just come to the knowledge of certain facts, which I am not able to verify as I desire, but which are of a nature so alarming, as to make it proper for me to enlist you for the help of brother George, without losing a day.

"About a month before he sailed for South America, I received from Herbert & Co. as collateral, on a loan of £20,000, Bank of England notes for the same amount, which had been obtained in the midst of the panic, by Herbert & Co., upon the condition that they should not be *used* in any way, nor put into circulation within the next following twelve months.

"Enclosed you will find a list of these notes with the marks and numbers, examined and certified by Charles and Arthur, and signed by me.

"When brother George was about to embark, he had a large amount of funds in my hands, which he thought he should have no occasion for, while away, and offered to leave with me.

"Having no use for the money, I proposed to him to step into my shoes, reimburse me for my advances to Herbert & Co., take the security into his own hands, divide the profits with me, and leave the bank-notes on special deposit where they could be used when the proper time should arrive.

"He agreed to this, and sailed within forty-eight hours; but what he did with the notes I never knew, nor have I any means of knowing. Some letter may have miscarried, and I know not how to communicate with him, nor where to address a letter, if he should be gone from Brazil.

"Yesterday Mr. Herbert called on me before breakfast, looking very pale, troubled, and anxious, which he accounted for, in the course of a short interview that followed, by saying that he had passed a sleepless night, had not been well for two or three days, and had but just come to the knowledge of a fact, which he felt bound to communicate to me, in relation to these Bank of England notes. It was this — the agreement with the bank was that these notes should not be put into circulation, *nor used in any way*, till the twelve months had expired; and Mr. Herbert, who had happened to meet brother George just before his embarkation, having understood from him that we had entered into an arrangement, professed to be greatly alarmed, lest the *use*

we had both made of these notes — Mr. Herbert and myself, I mean — might be considered a breach of faith on his part, if it should ever come to the knowledge of the directors, and might be ruinous to the credit of their house.

"I did not see the transaction, I confess, in the light he did, and I told him so; but still, as I knew he had been struggling for months under a heavy pressure, from which he was but just recovering, I did not much wonder at his anxiety, and I promised to write brother George, and beg of him not to make *any use* of the notes until the time had expired, or he heard further from me; and promising to divide the loss of interest with him after the twelvemonth had passed, up to the time when he might be able to use them to advantage. I wish you could have seen the poor fellow! — I never saw a man so changed in all my life. He wrung my hand — he wept and sobbed — and would have gone down upon his knees, I verily believe, had I not prevented him.

"There, my friend, you have now the whole case in your possession — you understand what is wanted, and I leave all the arrangements with you. We must save the poor fellow if we can; for, though we never had much dealing with the house, and I never liked Mr. Herbert before, believing him to be what I was once, in your judgment, my dear friend, much too adventurous for a moderate capitalist, wishing to do a safe business, I should be sorry to contribute in any way to his embarrassments."

While Mr. Bayard was reading this letter, slowly and distinctly, in a clear, steady voice, and with prodigious effect upon the jury, the bench, the bar, and all within hearing, the prisoner had stolen away on tiptoe — and inch by inch — to the immediate neighborhood of the witness, where he might hear every syllable, and where, as he stood in a deep shadow, the changes of his countenance, and any sudden outbreak of inward illumination, would not be visible to others.

"Thank God!" he murmured, as the witness finished the letter, and the crowd began to shuffle, and move about, and seemed well-nigh ready to burst into a spontaneous cheer. "'Now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, for my eyes

have seen thy salvation!' O my Father! come what may now — and whatever may be the final issue — I am satisfied; for now all that I was waiting for, and hoping for, has happened, and my generous, whole-hearted brother is vindicated, and the dead have triumphed!" All eyes were turned to him, as he lifted his locked hands high up in prayer and praise and thanksgiving, and some that stood nearest, were able to catch the words he breathed; and among others, Mr. Fay, who seemed to be greatly moved, for his mouth twitched, and his voice trembled, as he turned to the witness, and asked him if he had read the whole of the paper.

"All but the signature and the date," said Mr. Bayard.

"Read both, if you please," said the judge, who had been very busy taking notes, and looking into authorities.

"The letter is signed, 'Harper Maynard, for Maynard & Co.,' and sealed with his seal, and the date is, 'London, October 12, 1856.'"

"Well, gentlemen," said the judge — after waiting for a consultation to be ended between the prosecutor and Mr. Fay, with half a score of listening white-haired men at their elbows, all whispering together, and gesticulating with great earnestness — "what do you propose to do with the case?"

"One moment, your honor," said Mr. Fay, whose fine eyes lighted up with a sudden flash.

More whispering followed; and the judge, after waiting two or three minutes, added, —

"Have you made up your mind, Mr. Attorney, to proceed further with the case?"

Mr. Fay began to breathe more freely; here was an intimation not to be misunderstood.

The prosecutor bowed, and looked troubled for a moment, and then he leaned over the table toward a very aged man, with the beard of an apostle, and whispered something, to which the other replied with a shake of the head only, portentous and solemn as death.

"Have you done with the witness, Mr. Fay?" asked the judge, beginning to show signs of impatience.

"We have, your honor."

"Proceed with your cross-examination, if you please, Mr. Attorney," said the judge.

Whereupon the prosecutor, with a somewhat embarrassed air, took his seat, and after fumbling over his papers a few moments, as if looking for his brief, entered upon the cross-examination.

"After receiving the documents you have just read, what course did you take with regard to the pris—— with regard to Major Pendleton?"

Ah! — indeed! — it was no longer the prisoner at the bar — it was not even the accused — it was *now* Major Pendleton! Of course, the government was beginning to see the case in a very different light.

"I forwarded a brief letter of warning, with a certified copy of the list I hold, to my bankers in Paris, London, and Amsterdam — and to his correspondents in Buenos Ayres, New York, and Philadelphia."

"Did you send copies of the letter which came with the list?"

"No."

"And why not, pray?"

"I was afraid of miscarriage."

"Afraid of miscarriage!!" exclaimed the prosecutor; "I do not understand you, Sir. Would not the list and the letter go together — and why should there be any more danger of miscarriage for the letter, than for the list?"

"There would be no more danger from the miscarriage itself, but the consequences of a miscarriage might be very different. The list of itself, and the brief letter of warning I sent with it, were sufficient for friend George, if they reached him safely, to put him on his guard, while, if they were intercepted, or opened by a stranger, they could not possibly injure anybody."

"Not even Herbert & Co., hey?" suggested the prosecutor.

"Not even Herbert & Co., for their names were not mentioned."

"Ah! — indeed! — can you say when the facts you have testified to first came to the knowledge of Mr. Pendleton?"

"I cannot."

"Did you ever have any personal communication with him on the subject?"

"Yes."

"When, and where?"

"At New York — about the middle of the first month — called January."

"And how happened this?"

"He had missed me at Philadelphia — and while I had reason to believe that he was in South America, or travelling in Europe, we were thrown together by a strange providence at New York, in the midst of the terrible panic of last winter."

"Did he have any conversation with you, or with anybody in your presence, at the time you speak of, or at any other time, respecting these forged notes?"

"Am I at liberty to detail the circumstances that led to the conversation, as well as the conversation itself?" asked the witness, looking first at the judge, and then at Mr. Fay.

"I have no objection," said the prosecutor.

"Nor I," said Mr. Fay. "Let us have all the facts."

"The witness will proceed in his own way," said the judge.

"Circumstances, not necessary for me to explain here," said William Bayard, with a mournful and touching expression of the whole countenance which nobody understood, perhaps, but Arthur and his mother, "had thrown me in the way of the family, as I came out of a theatre."

"Out of a theatre! — *you!*" exclaimed the prosecutor.

"Out of a theatre!" cried Mr. Fay, looking up astonished, as if wondering what would come next.

"What theatre, if you please?" continued the prosecutor, with what he meant for a smile, though it was only a sneer at the best.

"The small theatre in Chambers Street — Burton's, I think they call it."

"Had you been in the theatre?"

"I had."

"What was the play that evening, Mr. Bayard?"

"It was not in the evening — it was at noon-day."

"Indeed! — and what was represented, if you please, at that unusual hour? What was the play?"

"There was no play — no representation whatever, so far as I could judge. It was a prayer-meeting."

Had a thunderbolt fallen through the roof, the bench, bar, and jury could not have been more astonished. There was a moment of dead silence — then a low outburst of long-smothered sympathy — and then a confused whispering and tittering, slowly spreading to the lobbies, and passage-ways, and antechambers; but all these demonstrations were instantly rebuked, and a serious, heavy shadow settled upon the upturned countenances of the crowd, as the examination was renewed.

"The witness will proceed without further interruption," said the judge.

"It was there, on the sidewalk in Chambers Street, as I was coming away from the theatre, that I first encountered the young man, Arthur Maynard, who has been examined here as a witness. I knew him instantly, from the resemblance he bore to his — to his mother;" — here the voice of the good man quavered — "with him was the young woman, Julia, and her uncle George, whom I was not then acquainted with; but I determined to satisfy myself at once; and with that view, I followed them to the St. Nicholas Hotel — and after ascertaining the truth, I determined to see the uncle and come to a right understanding about the notes. I called, and saw Arthur for a few minutes; but having forgotten to take these papers with me — the originals — concluded to defer the interview till the morrow; but, on the morrow, I was taken suddenly ill, and confined to my bed for several weeks; when, one day the man who watched with me, read from a morning paper that paragraph which has already gone to the jury, about the forged Bank of England notes which had been found in the street, near the Metropolitan, twisted together, and partly consumed. My mind misgave me — all the circumstances mentioned were of a nature to fill me with apprehension — and I lost no time in sending for friend George, and questioning him."

"Go on, if you please. Why do you stop?" said the prosecutor.

"With submission to the court," said the witness — "if it be proper, I am ready to detail the conversation, from beginning to end?"

"No objection being made, Sir," said the judge, — "you may proceed; using your own judgment, as to what, in your opinion,

may be relevant, or irrelevant, until you are stopped, or a new question arises."

"I will. He acknowledged that he had received one of my despatches containing the certified list, and a letter desiring him not to make any use of the notes — in any way — nor for any purpose, until he heard from me; that he instantly withdrew them from the bank, where they had been left sealed up, on special deposit, and as he was about embarking for Philadelphia, to take them with him; that in Philadelphia, he inquired for me, but understood that I was in Europe; that within the last forty-eight hours, he had been furnished with a printed list of these very notes, issued by the government of the Bank of England, and sent all over Europe and America, through police agents and postmasters, declaring them to be forged, enjoining the greatest vigilance and secrecy, and offering a large reward for the apprehension of the parties engaged in the business."

Here the witness appeared to be well-nigh overcome by his feelings. The tears ran down his cheeks — and the papers he held open in his hand, shook and rustled, as if a strong wind were blowing through them.

"Well, Sir — what more did he say?"

"He said that he had lost no time in satisfying himself; and having done so, he threw the whole into the fire, and stood over them, till they were burnt to ashes — not recollecting at the time, that on the passage, he had given his ward Julia, about £150, for pocket-money, without a word of caution, as the twelve-month had expired; that while pondering the matter with himself, and most anxious to see me, and the letter his brother had written me, which he had no doubt would exonerate him, as he knew from the first that his brother had received them of Herbert & Co. ——"

"Rigmarole!" whispered one of the gray-haired veterans to the prosecutor.

"So much the better" — was the reply. "Let him proceed."

"He said, too, that while pondering the matter with himself, he remembered all at once the notes he had given to his ward Julia; that he found upon inquiry, she had sent three or four to her brother Charles, through the Upper Canada post-office —

but that she had never passed a single note, nor attempted to do so, but once, when it was refused at the bar and returned to her, on the very day when the banks of New York suspended specie payments."

"Well, Sir — what next?"

"He told me, moreover, that he took all the notes Julia had left, and burnt them; as she has already stated."

"Did he appear to be much troubled — or not — so far as you could judge, when he made this confession?"

"Far from it — he appeared exceedingly happy and thankful."

"Happy and thankful for what!" exclaimed the prosecutor, "for the loss of twenty thousand pounds sterling! and a fair chance for the penitentiary — or the gallows — if he should be claimed under the treaty!"

Mr. Fay grew very pale — Arthur very red — the Major gloomy and fierce, for a moment or so; but all these alarming appearances died away, under the calm, steadfast rebuke of the judge's eye, who well knew that the prosecutor had been carried away by surprise, or a sudden burst of feeling, but did not mean to be brutal or offensive.

"Yes," continued the white-haired witness; "for notwithstanding the loss of the twenty thousand pounds, and the great danger he was in of disgrace, imprisonment, or death — he had so much to be thankful for! — he had wronged nobody — nobody was likely to suffer on his account — and as he had reason to believe that his nephew Charles knew all the circumstances, and would be able, when he got back, not only to clear him, but his father, and fasten the guilt upon Herbert & Co. — had he not abundant reason for thankfulness? At any rate, he seemed to entertain that opinion, and I must confess that I encouraged him in it; and when he knelt by my bed, and poured out his whole heart in thanksgiving, and praise, and supplication, I do verily believe, that I went with him to the end."

"Allow me to ask you, Sir," said the judge, in a mild, low voice, "if you showed the letter to him, which you had received with the list from his brother Maynard?"

"No — not at the time I have mentioned."

"Did you communicate the substance?"

"Nothing more than I have stated."

"And why not?"

"I was too ill for business; and hoping that no mischief would follow, I desired to wait until I could see the nephew, face to face."

"What nephew, Sir?" demanded the prosecutor.

"The nephew you have had for a witness here — Charles Parry. I may add perhaps, that finding him well acquainted with all the circumstances, and with the names of the parties, there was nothing for me to communicate beyond what has been offered in the shape of an admission by my departed friend, Harper Maynard, which might be better proved by a living witness perhaps, and which, if so proved, might not be so painful to the dear children — or to the widow," — faltering and turning away.

The judge leaned back in his chair and covered his face with his hands. The jury were greatly moved — a low murmur was heard, with labored breathing, and hysterical sobbing afar off — and the countenance of the prosecutor changed. Though greatly disappointed — and perhaps a little mortified — he did not appear vexed, nor very much dissatisfied. It was evident, moreover, that his opinion of the case had been gradually changing; and that his natural kindness of heart and manliness of temper were beginning to overtop his professional instincts, and that, as he looked around over the anxious eager eyes of the witnesses, he began to be more and more reconciled, at every step in the case, to what he could not bear to think of at first — nor to speak of with any patience, while acquainted with but one side of the story — an acquittal.

"Brother Fay," said he, at last, after a brief, sharp struggle with himself, leaning over the table, and speaking in a low, earnest voice, "I congratulate you with all my heart and soul, on what I foresee must be the result — judging by the looks of the jury and the judge — and I congratulate your client also, and beg of you to bring me acquainted with him, after the verdict is rendered; for, although, between ourselves, I don't much like the law of the case" — glancing at the bench — "as laid down by you, and taken for granted by the court, and have no serious doubt, I assure you, that my leading objections would

be sustained upon appeal — and that much of the evidence ruled in, ought to have been ruled out, as being between other parties, yet as we seem to have reached the truth, and the whole truth, at last, though in a roundabout way — and the Major has proved himself to be a magnanimous, large-hearted man — I waive all objections to the procedure, and now ask you plainly, what you desire to do with the case?"

"Thank you; let the jury return a verdict of *not guilty*, under your direction, without leaving their seats."

"Or shall we enter a *nol. pros.*?"

"We should prefer a verdict."

"Well, gentlemen," said the judge, seeing them withdraw, and straighten themselves up, after their consultation, "have you come to a proper understanding?"

"We have, your honor. And if the court is satisfied, we pray that the jury may be instructed, that if they believe the witnesses for the defence, and the letter to be what it purports to be, they are to return a verdict of *not guilty*."

A deathlike stillness followed.

The judge hesitated a minute or two, and then whispering with the prosecutor and with Mr. Fay, a pleasant change passed over his fine countenance — a benevolent smile gathered about his mouth — and he charged the jury as requested.

A slight murmur of approbation followed, which grew louder and louder, till rebuked by the judge with a rap on the desk, and by the sheriff, with a cry of "Silence, there! — Silence in court!"

But when the jury had consulted together, and they all stood up — and their names were called over, and they were asked if they had agreed upon their verdict — and the foreman answered, "Yes" — and then the clerk said to them, "Gentlemen of the jury, what say you? is George A. Pendleton guilty or not guilty, as charged in the indictment?" — there was something awful and portentous in the stillness that followed.

"Not guilty!" said the foreman.

"Not guilty, you say, Mr. Foreman! and so you say all! Hearken to your verdict, as the court records it, and ——"

But here the long suppressed feeling of the crowd broke forth

in a spontaneous cheer — followed by the sound of weeping and sobbing — and hurried, impatient exclamations; and there was a great bustle and stir among the witnesses, which, notwithstanding the very serious countenance of the judge, as he rapped the desk, and the officers of the court shouted, "Silence, there! silence!" continued for several minutes.

The prisoner was forthwith discharged, and the prosecutor came up to him, and congratulated him, offering his hand at the same time, which was taken with great thankfulness — and the bar rose almost in a body, as if startled in their sleep with a sudden burst of sunshine, or the chirping of little birds among apple-blossoms — and scores of well-dressed, middle-aged men, who, but the day before had refused to know the prisoner at the bar, now recollected the "*Major*" with the greatest pleasure in the world, assuring him, with countenances all of a glow, that they had foreseen the result; and in some cases foretold the result from the first — which was all very true, only the result was very unlike what they had either foreseen, or foretold.

"Adjourn the court!" said the judge, bowing to the Major, and then to Mr. Bayard, whom he called up to the bench and shook hands with.

"Oh yes! oh yes! oh yes!" cried the sheriff; and the court was adjourned forthwith; and the counsel for the prisoner, and his client, and the prosecutor, and all the witnesses for the defence, got together by themselves, and waited till the great throng had melted away — here a little group with their veils down — and there another weeping aloud — Miss Webb catching the Major by both hands in a transport of joy, and literally dancing round him — Miss Wentworth looking over the handkerchief she held to her eyes, and taking an inventory of all the handsome dresses about her — Julia holding one of Mr. Fay's hands between both of hers, very much as if she never meant to let go of it again while she breathed, and sobbing as if her heart would break; Mrs. Maynard looking into the calm, steady eyes of William Bayard, as if her ancient love had blazed up anew — and he, trembling all over with joy; and little Edith and her mother clinging to Charles, very much as if all three were in danger of being swept away together; and Arthur! poor, dear

Arthur! — all bright with hope and thankfulness; and the Major, august and serious, and looking as if he would give the world to be alone with his heavenly Father for half an hour — in some great solitude.

"God bless you all! good-bye!" said Mr. Fay.

"When shall we see you?" inquired the Major, "we have all our acknowledgments to make."

"Nonsense, my friend — but I shall see you, as soon as you have got over your flurry."

"Oh, do! — *do!*" said Julia, "we shall so long to see you!"

"Hoity toity!" whispered Arthur, as he caught Charles's eye, who did not appear to understand what was going on.

"And you, my excellent friend — we must see you at your earliest convenience, we shall have so much to say; when will you take a bed with us?" continued the Major, addressing himself to the venerable Quaker.

"I would rather not dine with thee, Elizabeth — let me drop in some evening, and take a cup of tea with the family, and I shall be satisfied — I am not very fond of strangers."

"But Mr. Fay is no stranger," said Aunt Elizabeth.

"Very true, and perhaps we may manage to drop in together — as I have no doubt he will have business with thee, before long."

"What *does* he mean?" thought Julia, and then, catching Sallie Webb's eye, she blushed to the very tips of her ears.

CHAPTER XXIII.

THE night following this triumphant acquittal, which not only set the prisoner free, and sent him on his way rejoicing, but so changed the whole aspect of the mysterious affair, as to fill the public heart — if the public may be supposed to have a heart — with admiration and sympathy for the accused, and for all the sufferers connected with him, was a night of prayer, a night of weeping and of joy, never to be forgotten. The very newspapers underwent a change. They were full of regrets and explanations and acknowledgments, and for three successive days, at the end of which time, the whole case, if not entirely forgotten, had come to be regarded as an old story — almost antediluvian — by the newsmongers and gossips of New York, nothing was to be heard but the praises of Mr. Pendleton, the great London banker, the large-hearted princely American. His unruffled serenity — his magnanimous bearing under the terrible accusation — his behavior in court, his calm, patient, self-sacrificing, self-denying temper, and amazing forbearance, continued month after month, under a crushing load of obloquy, for the sake of the widow and the fatherless, when, by a single word — by just turning his hand over, as it were, he might have cleared himself; and his calm, steadfast, unchangeable trust in the faithfulness of his heavenly Father, were favorite themes for a while among the wealthiest brokers and best business men of the day; and were mentioned in all the prayer-meetings, where it was now remembered, that he had been met with occasionally; and while his praises were in every mouth, and the newspapers were busiest, the pulpit and the platform took fire and went far ahead of the reporters, and special correspondents, and telegraphs; one after another, "taking up the wondrous tale," and making the most of

it, until months after the circumstances were all forgotten at New York, where the signal was first given, and the long roll of thunder was first heard, growing louder and louder for three days, and then dying away like the roar of cannon, after a beleaguered city has capitulated — the reverberations might be heard among the mountains and hills of New England, along the shores of the great western wilderness, and wherever the press had a gun planted, east, west, north or south, from the Atlantic to the Pacific.

There was undoubtedly much truth in all this, to begin with; but alas, for the best intentions of the worthiest men, who have a great purpose in view, there was also a great deal of exaggeration and embellishment, before the story was finished; so that sometimes the Major would feel his cheeks tingle and his ears burn, and he would start up from his chair, and pace the floor with a tread that shook the whole house, on meeting with a paragraph copied from a distant village paper into some of the New York mammoth journals. But there was no help for it. Contradiction would have only made the matter worse. If he denied any part of the story, under his own signature, that would be just what they wanted; for they would secure a correspondent, and whatever he failed to contradict, would be taken for truth, of course; and if he withheld his name, they would flare up, and refuse to correct any error, however momentous, and however obvious, at the suggestion of what, peradventure, they would call an anonymous scribbler — an acknowledged nobody.

On the morrow, when the household gathered for breakfast, it was evident enough they had not overslept themselves; and they were all so very serious, and so silent — for they talked together in such very subdued tones, and ate so little, that a stranger would have thought something very unpleasant had happened, or was about to happen. Looking at their faces, and hearing the little they had to say, it would never have entered his head that they were too happy to eat — or too happy to appear so. Yet such was the fact. Their hearts were too full; and they were not sufficiently recovered from their amazement, and from the sudden change in their feelings, to understand their deliverance aright. After breathing a ponderous blackness, day after day, for a whole

month — and all afraid to acknowledge their misgivings.— to find the sky no longer overcast, and the sunshine of God's love working through their hearts, and literally flooding their pathway — as they drew a long breath, and looked up — what was there in this world worth talking about, or worth eating?

"A word with you, Uncle George," said Charles, pushing away the only emptied cup to be seen upon the table, — "an explanation is due to you, for a ——"

"No, no, not here, if you please, my dear fellow," said the Major, rising as he spoke, — "let us go by ourselves, where there may be no danger of misunderstanding, or interruption."

"Excuse me, Uncle George — what I have to say, I should like to say here — just *here* — in the presence of witnesses, that my acknowledgment may be remembered, and the atonement correspond with the offence."

"What offence, my dear Charles? I am not aware of any offence on your part, nor of any misunderstanding between us, worthy of a moment's consideration."

"You bear me no grudge, I know, dear uncle; but as I have long borne you a grudge — a deadly grudge — forgive me, dear mother, and you, dear sister, I pray you, and bear with what you cannot understand, nor forgive, till I get through; and as I once declared in my wrath, good uncle, that I could never forgive you, and that I would follow you to the ends of the earth, to avenge myself — didn't I Julia? — I don't wonder you shudder, poor child! — I am anxious to relieve her terrors, and to do you and myself justice, by acknowledging that I was altogether wrong, and you altogether right, Uncle George; and that I wholly misunderstood your character and purposes — and that, being now in my right mind, as I hope, and sitting at the feet of Jesus ——"

"Merciful Father! what does he mean?" cried Julia, as her aunt Elizabeth turned toward her brother, and lifted both hands in astonishment ——

"Just what I have said, Julia. God has brought me to my senses, I believe — no matter how — no matter where — all that we may talk about hereafter; but my purpose now is to

acknowledge before you all, that I have wronged our good uncle, and then to beg his forgiveness ——"

"With all my heart!" said the Major; "and without caring to know in what way you have wronged me, my dear nephew, you have my full and free forgiveness, not only for what you may have said or done — but for whatever you may have intended or threatened to do; and may the All-Merciful forgive you, as freely as I do! There is my hand! — both of my hands, dear Charles! and now I hope you are satisfied; and the young people may be left to finish their breakfast in peace."

"Not so fast, Uncle George! It is but fair that you should know in what way I have wronged you."

"If you insist upon it ——"

"I do. Have you forgotten that dreadful night, when you tracked me to a den of thieves ——"

"Charles! are you mad?"

"Almost, dear uncle, when I review that portion of my life. I had it on my mind to go to the opera; but the nest of gamblers, with whom I had been associated for a while, headed me off, and I was foolish enough to go with them, although aware that they were in danger of an attack from the police, who had been upon the watch for nearly a month. While we were engaged in play, there was a loud knocking at the outside door, — the lights were instantly extinguished — the stakes withdrawn, — the instruments of gambling disposed of — and our weapons of death snatched up from the tables and chairs; and we all rushed to the windows, where the first person I saw by the street lamp was you, my dear uncle, and the first word spoken was by you, encouraging a policeman to mount a ladder set up against the window where I stood. Long before this, I had been told that you had set spies upon me, and that I was watched by a detective employed by you — and I was now assured that you were at the bottom of this whole affair, and were leading the attack."

The Major nodded.

"Transported with ungovernable rage, I flung off the ladder, while the man was on it, and just as he was reaching to grasp the sill of the window, to check his fall; there were two or three

pistol shots fired in quick succession — a ball struck the window near me — and I saw you lying upon the sidewalk, overthrown by the falling ladder, I believe — was it so?"

"It was even so, my dear nephew."

"What followed, you are already acquainted with. If not, I shall be happy to own up, in every particular, at some future period. That I escaped, and by the skin of my teeth, I dare say, you know; but you do not know, perhaps, that in addition to all these provoking, and rather troublesome interpositions, you must acknowledge — or I will for you — I had good reason for believing that you had interfered between me and poor little Edith, and that but for you, she would have consented to a runaway match with me."

"Well — have you finished?"

"For the present, I have."

"And how much of all this did you believe at the time, dear Charles?"

"Every word of it! And that was the reason why I swore to follow you, as I did — by night and by day — and to the ends of the earth — like the avenger of blood. Don't be frightened, Julia! nor you, Aunt Elizabeth — for, as I have told you before, I have come to my senses now, and acquit my good uncle here of all blame. What he did, I thank him for, with all my heart; and for what he did not, I forgive him!"

"Magnanimous indeed!" whispered Arthur.

"And pray, nephew, how much of all this do you believe now?"

"Well," — after a short pause — "I believe that you did watch me — that you did set spies upon me, and employ a detective to follow me — and that you did have something to do with that attack upon the nest of gamblers; but I wholly acquit you of all interference between little Edith and myself."

"There, my dear boy, you wrong me!" said the Major.

"How! — I do not understand!"

"It was owing to my interference, dear Charles, that Edith refused to marry you."

"No such thing, Uncle George! You were never more mistaken in your life. She told me so herself."

"But she did not know of my interference, nephew. I cautioned the mother, and she employed William Bayard to follow up the inquiry; and between them both, she was well persuaded, that unless you changed your habits of life — and gave up the associates we found you so much with — it would be unsafe to marry you."

"And you were right, uncle! But, strange as you may think it, neither your interference, nor that of Mr. Bayard, nor the entreaties of her mother would have prevented the marriage, had I been otherwise what I should be. Nay more — had I been wholly free from the dangerous habits you complained of, and warned her against, she would never have consented to a marriage with me."

"I do not understand you," said Aunt Elizabeth and Uncle George; both speaking together.

"But I do!" said Julia — her eyes filling with tears of joy and thankfulness. "Go on, brother!"

"What was the difficulty between you, then?" said his aunt Elizabeth. "What hindered the marriage?"

"'An evil heart of unbelief,' dear aunt. Poor little Edith was a Christian — a devout and humble Christian; and she would neither marry me, nor trust me, nor take my word, without proof, that if I was not altogether a Christian, I had not at least put it out of my power ever to become a Christian, by allowing a low appetite to obtain a mastery over my understanding and my affections, and my love and hope."

"Heroic child!" whispered Aunt Elizabeth.

"Generous creature!" exclaimed Uncle George.

"'Be but a believer!' said she, 'and God will take care of the rest. But, dear Charles,' she added — and I never shall forget her look — 'though you should reform to-morrow, and continue for a twelvemonth to lead a sober life, it would by no means follow that you would become, what you must be, if we are to be happy together — a believer!'"

Here Charles covered his face with his hands — leaned forward with both elbows on the table, and sat for several minutes without speaking or moving.

Julia waited until she could wait no longer; and stealing up

to him, and throwing her arms about his neck — and smoothing his abundant hair with her little hand — as a young mother would caress her babe, she whispered something in a low voice, which nobody heard but her brother.

"I do not know," said he, at last, after a sharp struggle, and lifting his head as he continued, so that Julia saw, for the first time in her life, the eyes of that dear brother brimming with moisture and just ready to overflow — "I dare not answer for myself, not having experienced anything of that sudden joy — that uplifting of the spirit — or that inward illumination, which so many have had. Otherwise, dear Julia, I might speak more decidedly; and perhaps, I ought to say to you, Aunt Elizabeth, and to you, Uncle George, that, although I believe God has been merciful to me, and that our blessed Saviour has answered my prayer, and that I have almost heard in the watches of the night, and especially in the midst of a terrible storm which threatened to send us all to the bottom, the whisper of power, 'Peace, be still!' — and again, at another time, after the storm had passed away, and the tumult was over, and the heaving sea went down at his bidding — I heard, or thought I heard, as at my very ear, a whisper of encouragement and hope, saying, 'Thy sins are forgiven thee!' — still, notwithstanding all this, for all this may have been, and probably was, a delusion — I must acknowledge that I have been greatly disappointed."

"Disappointed, brother! — how so?"

"I have found no such peace in believing as I had been promised by you and others, and as I expected."

"And what then?" whispered Arthur. "You were never the man to give up what you had once undertaken."

"What! You, too, Cousin Arthur!" cried Charles, with a look of astonishment. "Can it be possible!"

"I will not affect to misunderstand you, dear Charles; but while I acknowledge that I have learned to look upon life, and the blessings, and sorrows, and trials of life, within a few months, as I never did before — and as I never expected, nor even wished to do before, if I know my own heart — still, I am so far from being satisfied with myself, that I should be utterly discouraged, but for my trust in God's love and faithfulness."

"You have reached the same point I see, dear Arthur — but by a different path; and now I ask you what you are waiting for? what you are hoping for? what you intend to do?"

"To hold on — to persevere, with God's help — and if I perish, I perish!"

"Give us your hand, my brother!" cried Charles. "Come what may, we must fight this battle together, and side by side! We have enlisted for life. And it may be that salvation itself — like many other blessings that we are called upon to labor for, and toil after — if it could be had for the asking, would not be worth having."

"Brother Charles!"

"Don't be frightened, Julia! — by that, I mean, that if it were to be had for the asking, it would be undervalued."

"But *is* it not to be had for the asking, dear brother?"

"Yes — but coupled with it are conditions that must not be overlooked. We are to strive — we are to seek — we are to labor — we are to 'work out our own salvation with fear and trembling;' and after all is accomplished, we are to '*rejoice with trembling!*'"

"Very true, dear brother — I give up — I dare not hold an argument with you upon any subject, and least of all, upon this. I am afraid of you — and of myself."

"Let us leave the young people together awhile," said Uncle George to Aunt Elizabeth. "I want half an hour with you by yourself; and as they appear to be in a fair way of understanding one another, and of renewing their acquaintance, on a very pleasant footing, and are not likely to need our help, nor even to miss our company, what say you to a short drive? — I have ordered the 'Rockaway.'"

"With all my heart; it would refresh me, I am sure — and I have no doubt, strengthen you."

The Major rang the bell, and ordered the carriage round to the back piazza.

While waiting for Mrs. Maynard to equip herself — he turned toward the nearest wall, and throwing up his locked hands in a sudden gush of thankfulness — high up — as high up as he could reach, and leaning his hot forehead against the cool plastering,

breathed a hurried prayer, that he might be forgiven for all the secret murmuring, and impatience, and unthankfulness he had given way to; and for the want of faith he had manifested, month after month; notwithstanding his earnest and repeated professions to the contrary, while striving to reassure Elizabeth and Julia — and Arthur — and himself; wondering, as he reviewed the past, in silent prayer, that he did not feel happier now, and altogether more thankful than he was; and utterly astonished, that the dread calamity, which, while impending, appeared so tremendous, and so awful, now that it had been averted by God's mercy, should seem so much less terrible. A common trick of the great Adversary, which he was but just beginning to see through. The coming evil is exaggerated, that we may be disheartened, and almost afraid to pray; but once over, it is undervalued, that we may not be troublesome in our acknowledgments, nor over-thankful.

The Major was interrupted by the rustle of drapery and a low sob.

As he withdrew his hands from the wall, and turned toward the sound, he saw his beloved sister standing near him, with her hands clasped, and large tears rolling down her cheeks.

"Oh, my brother!" she cried, — "my dear brother! — what can I say to you for all your goodness and forbearance, throughout this terrible affair! I have been afraid to speak to you — and even now — I tremble to think, how dreadfully we misunderstood you, for a moment! Can you forgive me?"

"Forgive you, dear sister! I have nothing to forgive. I know what you refer to — I foresaw it, like the bitterness of death — and I meant to prepare you for it, on the morning of the last day, when I begged you to *believe in me*, whatever might happen."

"I know it! I know it, brother! and I did believe in you — and we all believed in you — but oh, my brother! it was the most awful, and the sorest trial for a few minutes, that I ever went through with in all my life. I felt as if my last hope on earth had been shipwrecked — and forever — as if God himself had forsaken us — and that even my brother, my own dear generous brother, had lost sight of the widow and the fatherless, and cared for nothing but himself. Oh! can you forgive me?"

"To be sure, I can! It was no more than I expected — and had reason to expect — and was fully prepared for. It was not in human nature for you to see the end from the beginning, as I did — though I was rather in the dark upon some points, and so indeed was Mr. Fay — owing to the strange, mysterious management of our friend William."

"Not a word against him, I beseech you, dear brother!"

"No, indeed! not for my life. There were times, to be sure, when I thought him wilful and crotchetty; and but for Mr. Fay, who had the greatest confidence in his judgment and foresight, I should have taken the whole business into my own hands at one time."

"What a mercy you did not!"

"A mercy indeed, Elizabeth; for now, that it is all over, I see that if I had had my way, and Charles had not been forthcoming so opportunely, though I might have been set free, a cloud of suspicion might have rested for ever and ever upon the departed. Even to this hour, I do not understand how he managed to obtain the very evidence I needed, and for which we wanted another continuance — but never mind! we shall know in good time, I dare say, and we cannot be thankful enough, now, that your friend William, with his Quaker guns, drove that fast-anchored Mr. Fay from his moorings. If the Court had refused to continue the case, and we had been obliged to go to trial without the living testimony of Charles, there is no telling what might have been said of the papers furnished by Mr. Bayard. But come — the carriage is waiting, and I have a matter of great importance to settle with you on the way."

"With me!"

"Come, come! jump in, and after we are out of hearing, I will endeavor to satisfy you that it is with you, and with nobody else."

After they had passed the gate, and entered upon the broad thoroughfare, the Major drew up, and let the horse walk.

"Elizabeth," said he, coming to the point like a man whose heart was too full for circumlocution, or roundaboutness, which is the better word by far, "have you any reason to believe that Arthur and Julia understand each other?"

"Understand each other — how?"

"Does Julia understand that Arthur loves her? — that's what I mean."

"But does he love her, brother George?"

"That is not answering my question, Elizabeth. Be frank with me — I am willing to make large allowances for a mother — but we are entering upon a very serious business, and I am anxious to see my way clear."

"Well!"

"Well — Arthur loves Julia, and you know it, Elizabeth, although I sometimes think the poor boy hardly knows it himself — but does Julia know it?"

"It could not well be otherwise, if your supposition is true — for Julia is not wanting, believe me, in this, the most beautiful and sure of womanly instincts. Do not misunderstand me, brother, I pray you; there was a time, I believe, when my poor boy was madly in love with Julia, though too sensitive and too proud to acknowledge it; and Julia may have seen — must have seen — day after day, and month after month, enough to satisfy her of all this; but he kept the secret, and so did she."

"Did you ever mention the subject to her?"

"No, indeed — I knew her too well."

"Ah!"

"And love her too much."

"Why, what would have happened, think you, if you *had* mentioned it?"

"An immediate separation. I must have sent Arthur away, or found another home for Julia — and we could not well spare either you know, dear brother."

"No, indeed! what would have become of me? and what of you, my dear sister, but for the comfort and consolation we have had in the society of these dear children? But — between ourselves — what think you Julia would have answered, if you had mentioned the subject?"

"I hardly know — she might have silenced me forever, by fixing her large eyes upon me — full of tears — and saying not a word in reply; or by walking out of the room, without lifting her eyes from the floor."

"Elizabeth."

"Well."

"Do you think Julia loves Arthur now? or that she ever did love him?"

"I dare not say; there was a time, perhaps, a year or two ago, when they were no longer brother and sister, and she had begun to feel shy of his brotherly attentions, and used to tremble and grow pale, if he came in her way abruptly — when, perhaps, the affections of her girlhood — her sisterly affection for Arthur — might have undergone a change, with a little proper encouragement; but Arthur was a boy, and thoughtless, and foolish — and she was often troubled with his levity about serious things, and there grew up on her part, and very slowly, a sort of alienation — a want of sympathy on his, which resulted, after a few months, in a sorrowful estrangement."

"Very well. I am satisfied. And now to business. What think you of Mr. Fay?"

"Of Mr. Fay! Why do you ask, brother? You know that I have the highest opinion of Mr. Fay.. I look upon him as not only one of the best informed, and most remarkable, but one of the best men I ever knew."

"So far, so good; but do you know what Julia thinks of him?"

"Very much as I do, I believe."

"You have seen them together — and by themselves — and you are a woman, with what you call the instincts of a woman; and I ask you now plainly and directly, if you think Julia has any other feeling toward Mr. Fay, than that of sincere friendship?"

"And almost unbounded admiration, perhaps?"

"And deep thankfulness, on our account?"

"I am unable to answer, as I would wish, dear brother. Julia is no trifler — she was never a flirt — and sometimes, when I have seen her watching the play of his fine countenance, with tears in her eyes, and trembling from head to foot, if he but touched her hand — or drew up his chair by her side — that she must feel, though she might never acknowledge it, even to herself, something more than friendship — a lurking tenderness

perhaps, which only needed cherishing, to become a lasting and holy manifestation of that strange, elective affinity which we call love."

"As I hoped, Elizabeth! — as I have long thought! — Well, should you have any objection to Mr. Fay, if he were to offer himself to Julia?"

Mrs. Maynard hesitated.

"Well — what say you?"

"I have but one, dear brother."

"And what is that?"

"Mr. Fay is not a religious man."

The Major was thunderstruck. He had never thought of this before.

"Well, my dear sister — you may as well understand the case. For the last month, Mr. Fay has been resolved to offer himself to Julia the moment my affair was decided — unless we should object."

"Has he ever said anything to her, do you know? — but I need not ask, for I saw enough at the trial yesterday, to satisfy me that he could not have mentioned the subject to her; otherwise, her behavior toward him could be reconciled to the calm propriety of her whole past life, only upon the supposition that they were secretly betrothed — and that would be impossible with her. No, no — she would have been too much embarrassed — and under too much restraint yesterday, to take his hand as she did — or to speak of him, and to him, as she did, if he had ever mentioned the subject of marriage to her."

"You do Mr. Fay no more than justice, my dear Elizabeth. He has not offered himself to her — and he will not, he says, even though he should have our free consent, *until quite sure of being accepted.*"

"What!"

The Major repeated Mr. Fay's declaration, with a smile.

"Indeed! — he will not offer himself then, till quite *sure* of being accepted! Let Mr. Fay beware! He has wholly mistaken the dear child's character; and if this should come to her knowledge, there would be no hope for him."

"You think so?"

"I *know* so. Julia Parry is not a woman to betray herself in advance; and he who counts upon her admiration, or gratitude — or tenderness, if you will — to this extent, will find himself most wofully disappointed, I promise you!"

"Would it not be well for you to sound Julia upon the subject, before we answer Mr. Fay?"

"No, brother, I dare not speak with Julia upon a matter of such awful moment, unless invited by her to do so. You little know her depth and strength of character; she herself, does not, I verily believe. Again and again have I been astonished at some new and beautiful revelation of her inward nature, when I thought I knew her so well, that nothing she could ever do, or say, would astonish me. I had watched her so long, and so faithfully, year after year, by the help of others, and of late, for myself, that I had come to believe I knew her well, and that I could foresee not only her decision, but her very language and behavior, under almost any conceivable circumstances; but her self-possession — her steadfastness — her wonderful composure, through all the trying scenes of the last few months, have satisfied me that Julia Parry is not a woman to be prejudged, even by those who know her best. You would have me talk with her about Mr. Fay — but how can I do so, after what you have said of his intentions? Until he has offered himself — or satisfied us that he intends to do so, in good faith — how would it be possible for me to confer with Julia upon the subject? And if, by any chance, the dear child should come to a knowledge of what he has communicated to you, in his foolish self-complacency — or blind presumption — I care not which — there would be no hope for him, whatever her secret inclinations might have been before."

"Well, well, dear sister, you are to judge for yourself, and act for yourself; but perhaps you would be willing to have a word with Charles?"

"With Charles! my dear brother? Are you mad! What does Charles know of Mr. Fay? and how on earth could I manage to inform a doting brother, in such a way as not to offend him, that Mr. Fay felt a great admiration for his sister, and after obtaining our consent, and his, if he met with proper en-

couragement from the lady herself, he might be willing to go further?"

"Well done, Elizabeth! I confess I did not see it in this light. On the contrary, it seemed to me very generous and high-minded to come to us first, before he had broached the subject to her, so that if, for any reason, or no reason, we chose to object, there would be an end of the matter, and Julia would never hear of it; while, if we assented, as I am sure we should, there would be nothing left for him, but to prevail upon the lady herself, should he see any reasonable ground of hope."

"Oh, that's another affair. I have no objection to his withholding a declaration till he sees a reasonable ground for hope; though I certainly have, and so would any other woman, with a decent share of respect for herself, to his waiting for encouragement, or *assurance*."

"No, no, Elizabeth, ——"

"No, no, brother! But I say, yes, yes! for if he is determined to wait until quite *sure* of being accepted, what is that, I pray you, but waiting for encouragement and *assurance*?"

"Oh, you women! — but being only a man, I do not pretend to see clearly, nor to advise further; nor do I at all understand the greatest of all mysteries to me — the mystery of womanhood."

"Being a bachelor, dear brother — how should you? Were you a husband and a father, having a woman child to get acquainted with and watch over, I dare say you would soon be enlightened."

"I dare say, and so" — hesitating — "I shall take the matter into serious consideration, I promise you, and without losing much time, neither."

What could he mean? Elizabeth looked at him with a puzzled expression — and they continued their way in silence.

On their return to the cottage, at the end of a very slow and rather serious drive, along by the blue sparkling sea, though the weather was delightful, and the atmosphere charged with sunshine, the breath of flowers, and the warmth of happy hearts, till they overflowed with silent thankfulness, and the green earth, and the blue sky, and the multitudinous leafing, half-way between

both, grew mysterious and sympathetic, and they were almost tempted at one time to alight, and offer up a hymn of thanksgiving and acknowledgment, in the hallowed stillness of the hour, they found Miss Wentworth and her niece, and Mrs. Archibald and little Edith, and Charles and Arthur, and at last, that good man, William Bayard himself, all waiting for them, and watching the distant highway through the windows, front and back.

Here sat Julia, with her arm round the waist of Edith, and clasping her little hands to her heart — with Charles leaning over them, and supporting himself with his hand upon the wall, and eyes nearly shut, as if in silent prayer; and the mother, Mrs. Archibald, looking too happy for speech.

A little way off, sat Sallie on the sofa, with her veil flung aside — a little bonnet, like a basket of flowers, tilted back on her shoulders — both elbows resting on the top of a chair, watching Arthur and Charles, and trying to make out the relationship of the parties — or perhaps the meaning of the mysterious pantomime.

Yet farther off, and somewhat aloof, stood Arthur and Mr. Bayard talking together in a low whisper, with their eyes directed, now to the little group, where Edith sat on a low cricket, and all in a heap at the time, and then at the lordly Charles, and then at Sallie; Miss Wentworth meanwhile watching the window, and listening for the noise of wheels, or the sound of hurrying steps.

As the Major entered, following Mrs. Maynard, Sallie sprang from the sofa in a transport, flung the chair aside, gave a sort of nod to the mistress, with a word of cheer, and a ringing laugh, and catching the startled Major — not round the neck to be sure — but by both hands, and looking at him with eyes running over, she assured him that he had not been out of her head for a moment, since the good people at the court-house — the jury, she believed they were called — had sent them all off about their business, and so handsomely too! that she hadn't slept a wink — nor eaten a mouthful — and that now, *now*, it was all over! — and here she appealed to her aunt Maria — and plumped into the nearest chair, and fell a-sobbing, as if her very heart would empty itself in the overflow that followed.

Mrs. Maynard looked troubled and somewhat astonished; her

brother very much embarrassed — and Aunt Marie indignant — and everybody else but Julia, amused; while Edith lifted her head from Julia's lap and looked about from one face to another in amazement, as if trying to make out the play.

"I know, good folks — I know I am a great simpleton," said Sallie, wiping her eyes with her knuckles, and then kicking her feet, and flourishing her embroidered handkerchief, till her aunt interfered, and offered her a fan; "and you are welcome to laugh at me, just as much as ever you like — and I shan't blame you at all, any of you — not even that little thing there," — nodding at Edith — "for I see she can't keep in much longer — no, indeed, not I! — if you should laugh till you split yourselves!" — all which was said in a hurry, as fast as she could speak, with continual changes of tone, and with all sorts of accompaniments, crying, and snuffling, and sobbing, and laughing, till those who knew her best began to feel anxious.

"My dear child — recollect thyself," said William Bayard, coming up to her, and laying his fatherly hand upon her beautiful hair, and smoothing it, as he spoke — "thee forgets there are strangers about thee."

"And what if there are!" cried Sallie, catching his hand to her lips. "What care I for strangers! Haven't I been half crazy for the last month! — and absolutely crazy for the last eight and forty hours! — and would you have me look as if butter wouldn't melt in my mouth, just because there are strangers about me, after I have come to my senses!"

"Don't make a fool of yourself, Sallie Webb!" said her aunt. "Why, what *is* the matter with you! I never saw you behave so, in all my life!"

"I wish I knew, aunty. Overjoyed, I'm thinking."

"Well, what o' that! We are all overjoyed, I dare say — but we are not stark staring mad, I hope — we haven't quite lost our senses!"

"Dear Sallie, forgive me!" said Julia, leaving Edith to the care of her mother, and coming up to the poor girl, who, after a passionate burst of weeping, had become suddenly pale — pale as death — "I understand you, and I ought to have said so from the first. You were dreadfully fatigued yesterday, standing so

much, and undergoing so much, while we were clinging together and trying to comfort one another, in our selfishness, and forgetting you altogether; and I might have known that you would suffer for it, as you say — and pass a sleepless night, as we did — and have no appetite for breakfast — any more than we had. Compose yourself, I pray you — here, take my arm, and go up with me to my chamber and rest yourself awhile, and you will soon get over this. I know well enough what I am saying, dear — I have had some little experience — and you must yield to me, please!"

The poor girl took her arm, and tried to rise — but staggered and tottered, and would have fallen perhaps, if the Major, who happened to be nearest, had not sprung forward and caught her — with his arms round her waist — and her rich wonderful hair, and the little bonnet and ribbons and flowers, all afloat over his shoulder, as he led her off — or rather, as he carried her off by main strength — for her little dainty feet dragged along upon the floor.

Julia led the way — and all the rest stood looking after them in silence; Aunt Marie aghast — Arthur with a mischievous smile, and his mother as if not quite certain whether she was awake or asleep.

CHAPTER XXIV.

THE weather had now grown oppressive and sultry, and there was no sleeping, and no living, far away from the rattling brooks, and whispering leaves, and changeable herbage of the country — the weltering landscape — and the blue sparkling sea, all astir with the coming breeze.

Nothing artificial — not even the rejoicing fountains of the city, with their bright tumbling waters, in the midst of real trees and real turf, green with a perpetual baptism, could satisfy the cravings or instincts of people, who had not entirely forgotten what it was to breathe a living air, wholesome and pleasant, free from dust, and uncontaminated with city associations, as if constantly winnowed by the wings of angels; to lie half-awake on the slope of a hill, hour after hour, toward sunset, listening to the drowsy anthem of a far off sea-breeze, or to the everlasting pulses of the ocean, moaning in its sleep.

The stillness of earth and air after nightfall, in the neighborhood of the cottage, was wonderfully soothing to the troubled hearts and over-busy imaginations in that household of hope and trust; and now that the heavy cloud was lifted — and the bitterness of death all over — and the sorrow and fear and anguish of suspense — and that dreadful sinking of the heart, with which they had so long been familiar, was well-nigh forgotten, they would lie awake hour after hour, in the silent watches of the night, with a prayer upon their lips, or a new song in their hearts, or in the daytime, stretched upon the sofas, or lolling about in the large, deep easy-chairs, with the blinds closed, and the curtains pushed aside, either half-asleep, or dreaming, till the slamming of a door, the rattle of wheels, the shout of Charley, or the clamorous bark of his playfellow, would bring them all to their feet, with a suddenness infinitely amusing — to others.

Meanwhile, Mrs. Archibald, little Edith, and Charley and the dog, had been persuaded to come over and rest themselves for a month or two, while the weather was growing hotter and hotter every day, and were already looked upon as part of the family; Mr. Bayard was a constant visitor, on the best possible terms with himself, and with everybody else, and growing handsomer and younger every day of his life. Mr. Fay dropped in occasionally, to the gratification of all parties — even of Arthur and Charles, who roomed together, in a neighboring cottage, built for the gardener, but for a long while unoccupied — and so far as one might judge by looks and appearances, no one of the whole had anything to complain of, or to be sorry for.

Charles and Arthur were making arrangements for a copartnership, and just when they had reached a point where nothing seemed to be wanted, but immediate, instead of prospective capital, there came a letter through the penny-post, informing Mr. Pendleton that he would receive, on application to Willoughby & Co., bankers, a certificate of deposit for £10,000, which the writer, who did not give his name, desired to be credited to a certain transaction with Herbert & Co., of London; adding that, hereafter, if circumstances were favorable, and the "*dupe*" continued patient, something more might be hoped for.

The Major was not a little astonished — and though somewhat suspicious, and shy, and slow to believe — yet as he could see no possible danger or mischief, in ascertaining the truth, he called at once upon the bankers mentioned, and found a certificate of deposit from Peabody & Co. to his credit, for the amount mentioned, without a word of explanation. This looked well — and though the Major had given up the whole amount for a dead loss, and was in a condition to do so without embarrassment, still it was a comfortable and a pleasant thing to find that loss taking so different a shape; and now that fifty per cent. was paid — and more promised, if circumstances were favorable — what might not be hoped for, in the progress of time, if the wrongdoers, who had escaped to parts unknown, should continue to thrive?

On his return to the cottage, buoyant with new hope, and not only breathing sunshine, but looking sunshine, the Major saw

Mr. Fay's light carriage ahead of him, but too far off to be overtaken, before it drew up in somewhat of a hurry, and that gentleman sprang out, and ran up the steps and rang the bell with such unseemly haste, as to startle the Major for a moment; nor was he much relieved, when, as he followed, Mr. Fay turned upon him suddenly, with a pale, serious face, and greeted him with a look, which might have troubled him sorely — as "coming events cast their shadows before" — but for what followed.

"My dear Sir," said he, taking the Major's hand between both of his, just as the door opened, "I hope you are not going out again, before dinner — I may want to see you after I have got through my business with another party." And then turning to the waiter, he asked if Miss Parry was at home.

The waiter bowed, and stepped further back to let him pass; and just then, the farthest parlor-door opened a few inches, of itself, and the Major led the way into the front drawing-room, and begged Mr. Fay to be seated, while the waiter carried up his card.

The room was all in shadow; and the fresh wind blowing through the woodbines and clambering roses at the open windows, filled the air with a delicious fragrance, while not a ray of straggling sunshine was able to creep through the closed blinds.

"You'll excuse me," said the Major, after he had seen Mr. Fay disposed of, "and when you get through with your *business* I shall be happy to have a talk with you — I have something to communicate, which I think you will find rather out of the common way, and rather pleasant withal."

Mr. Fay bowed — but without opening his mouth, or appearing to understand a syllable of what the Major had been saying to him.

After a few minutes, Julia, who never kept anybody waiting, and was always in trim for such occasions, appeared at the door, and coming forward with girlish eagerness, and with both hands outstretched before her, met Mr. Fay with such an expression of cheerfulness and trust, that he stopped for a moment, and still keeping her hands in his, turned her toward the light of the nearest window, as if to satisfy himself that he had nothing to fear, and then led her to the sofa. On the way, Julia reached

out her hand, as they passed the window, to push open the nearest blind, but he prevented her.

"Excuse me," said he, touching her hand as he spoke, and retaining it for a moment *so* naturally, and with so little of apparent calculation, that Julia, poor thing! was entirely thrown off her guard.

"There — will that do?" he added, after pushing open the blind, and letting a part of the transparent, snowy curtain, fall between her face and the afternoon light, all breathing of roses, and trembling with delicious warmth.

A minute or two of deep silence followed — there was a sound of low breathing, and then of a hurried beating, which by the end of another minute or two, became a downright throbbing — till the deathlike stillness grew absolutely painful, and poor Julia's girlish eagerness, and cheerful, unembarrassed manner disappeared altogether; and Mr. Fay began to lose heart, and, for the first time in all his life, perhaps, to feel that he had undertaken too much — or that he was not altogether prepared — nor quite so sure of himself, nor of her, as he had believed. In short, he wanted more "assurance."

At last he spoke — but oh! with how changed a voice! Julia would not have known it, so unlike were the cadences to any that she had ever heard — so mournful — so deeply felt — and so full of gentleness and humility.

She was moved to the innermost depths of her nature, before she well understood what he was saying; and a tear fell upon the large, shapely hand in which her own was nestling and trembling — all unconsciously of course — for how could it be otherwise?

"My dear young friend," said he, — and then he faltered and stopped, and half rose from the chair, and Julia caught away her hand, with a sudden impulse, and waited for him to finish, with her eyes fixed upon a distant door, which appeared to be opening and shutting of itself.

Mr. Fay's attention had been attracted by the same appearance, and after satisfying himself that the door was really shut, and that the soft stepping he heard in the passage-way was not likely to interfere again, at least for the present, he returned to

the chair by the window — but with a sinking of the heart, and a trembling of the joints which, as he afterwards acknowledged, he had never felt before in all his life, nor had any belief in.

"My dear young friend!" he repeated, in a firmer, though still tremulous tone, "I have long waited for this opportunity, wondering at myself that I should so greatly desire it, and still be so much afraid of the possible consequences. You tremble, I see — and you are very pale — and it may be therefore — indeed it *must* be that you are already somewhat prepared; but ——" and here he came to another full stop, and then, after a sharp, inward struggle and two or three vain attempts, he found voice enough to continue in a very low, subdued tone, which went straightway to the heart of poor Julia, and obliged her to turn away her face, and look out of the window in a hurry.

"But, although *you* may foresee the result, and must, in the nature of things be prepared for it — since, do what I may, and say what I will, everything must depend upon you — I have only to assure you that I find myself" — taking her hand into his — "after months of preparation, wholly unprepared."

Julia caught her breath — and struggled to withdraw her hand, as if she plainly foresaw the catastrophe; but he persisted in retaining it, and she submitted — of course.

"Nay, nay, — why should you not allow me to keep this little hand for a few moments longer, Julia, — dear Julia!"

What could the poor little thing do! To snatch it away, under all the circumstances of the case, would be at least unfriendly, if not cruel, and might seem to savor of coquetry; for how many times had she put both hands into his, without mincing the matter, and lived through it!

Mr. Fay grew more and more serious, and after another brief struggle, obtained such a mastery of himself, that he began to be understood.

"You must have long foreseen this — I am sure you must — although you are so agitated now, as if wholly taken by surprise."

No answer.

"Well, then — let us come to the point, my dear young friend — my friend forever, come what may of this interview!

— I have no experience in these matters. I know little of women, and less of what they expect from us, when we are profoundly in earnest, but" — pressing her hand to his heart, and trying to look into her averted eyes — "but, in a word, I love you, dear Julia, — I love you, with all my heart and soul, and with all my strength ——"

Julia started up from the chair, as if she had been suddenly wakened from a long, delicious dream, by a thunder-clap, and she stretched forth the little hand she had liberated in her abruptness, and tottered toward the bell-rope ——

Mr. Fay sprang forward and touched the bell just as she sank down upon the sofa, and covered her face with her hands.

"Gracious God!" he exclaimed, as the door opened of itself, and very much as if somebody had been waiting outside for the signal — "what have I said! what have I done, poor child, that you should be so frightened! Speak to me, Julia — in mercy, speak to me!"

"Air! air! I must have air!" she whispered, — making a motion with her hand, which brought the servant-girl up to her side — "open the window, please! ——"

The girl stared with astonishment; for the window was wide open and the fresh wind blowing upon her.

"Water! quick, quick!" said Mr. Fay.

The girl disappeared for a few moments, but soon returned with a tumbler, looking very much frightened, and blushing up to the eyes.

A single glance at the poor creature satisfied Mr. Fay that she had been listening.

After Julia took the tumbler, the girl turned to go, in obedience to a look from Mr. Fay — but stopped two or three times before she reached the open door, as if expecting to be recalled; another look from that gentleman, accompanied by a slight motion of the hand, brought her to her senses, and she flung out of the room with a toss of the head, not to be mistaken, and with something that sounded very like a half-smothered giggle.

But Julia, who sat with her hand over her eyes, pale and trembling, and speechless for a time, saw nothing of all this.

"Forgive me, dear child, I pray you," said Mr. Fay, at last,

pushing away the drapery from the nearest open window, and then taking a low chair, and seating himself just in front of her. "I have terrified you, I see, by the startling abruptness of the disclosure — but really if you could look into my heart, I am sure you wouldn't wonder at my vehemence" —— vehemence! — he might as well have said passionate enthusiasm, or utter self-abandonment — for he was guilty of neither; and after the first faltering and trembling, had been as much master of himself, as if he were managing the case for another.

Twice poor Julia tried to speak, in reply — and twice no sound issued from her half-opened lips; but her chest heaved, and her breathing was that of a sleeper laboring to awake.

At last she recovered so far as to see that Mr. Fay had got possession of her hand once more, and was looking very much as if he meant to keep it. Gently, but firmly, the hand was withdrawn, just as he was about lifting it to his lips, and then, fixing her large, clear, though troubled eyes upon him, with a look he never could think of afterward without a shiver, she said, in a low, but very distinct whisper, — "Mr. Fay, — you are deceived."

"Deceived! — *how?*"

"In some way, I know not how, you have been misled."

"What mean you, Julia!"

"I mean this, and only this. While I have been regarding you as a friend — as the dearest friend I have on earth, out of my own family, — I see now that you have misunderstood my feelings, and that, O God forgive me!" covering her face with her hands, and bursting into a passion of tears — "while I have been watching and studying your character, with all the earnestness and sympathy of the tenderest friendship, and with the deepest thankfulness, for what you have done for us — oh, I fear, I do indeed fear, that I have been too unguarded — unwomanly, perhaps ——"

"Julia! — Miss Parry! ——"

"Nay, nay — do not be angry with me! Do not look at me so, or you will break my heart!" and here she caught his hand to her lips, in what he mistook for a transport of tenderness — and then, as if suddenly recollecting herself, let it fall, with an

impatient cry, and moved farther off, and would have risen, and left the room perhaps, if he had not prevented her.

"One moment, my dear young friend. You think I am deceived, — you reproach yourself with deceiving me, but — Julia — hear me! *I* am *not* deceived, though I believe *you* are."

Julia trembled violently.

"Little as I am acquainted with that greatest of all mysteries, a woman's heart — I am sure I cannot be mistaken, dear child, in what I am now going to say."

Julia waited in breathless expectation for what was to follow.

"I must be plain with you, dear child. You are a woman of high principle — of deep religious earnestness; you are no trifler — you mean all you say, and sometimes more; and your actions are of a piece with your words; your behavior with your speech."

A short pause, during which he appeared to be collecting himself.

"You are by nature, both serious and reserved — haughty perhaps, and I have seen you, when I thought you both unreasonable and imperious; — forgive me, I pray you, if I have misunderstood you, upon these points — and believe me, on my word, that I would not wrong you for my life."

Julia sat up, and faced him, with her head thrown a little back, as if wondering what he would say next.

"Now — whatever you may think, or say — I feel sure, as sure as I now do that I am talking with you, face to face — absolutely *sure*, that your feelings toward me are not as you are trying to persuade yourself and me — those of mere friendship. I do not say what they are. They may not amount to what is called love, in the story-books of the day — but that they are something more than friendship, I believe — and in fact I *know*; deny it, if you dare, Julia — deny it, if you can!"

Julia was silent, but a sudden flush overcame the distressing paleness, which had continued till now, and there was a look of embarrassment, and a gentle heaving of the bosom, as he continued, which, on the whole, rather encouraged him.

"Now, as I have said before, while I am satisfied — *satisfied*,

beyond the possibility of a doubt, as we say at the bar — that you have long entertained feelings toward me, tenderer than mere friendship — forgive me, Julia, for speaking so very plainly — I have not been satisfied that they were such as you would certainly feel for the man you should choose out of all the world for everlasting companionship — no, no, Julia — however presumptuous I may have been up to the point I have mentioned — I have not been at any time, and I am not now, so presumptuous as to feel certain of your love."

Julia sat more upright, with her eyes fixed upon the distant landscape, and grew calmer.

"What might have come of the feeling you call friendship, had I been a little more patient — and waited a few months longer, I do not pretend to foresee; but I cannot bear suspense — I am suffering both in body and mind — so that I am unable to discharge the duties of my profession, as I ought — my health is failing — I cannot sleep — I have no appetite — I am growing unreasonable and peevish, and am constantly reminded of what I used to hear about your uncle George."

"Oh, Mr. Fay! — how can we ever be sufficiently thankful to you, for your friendship toward that dear uncle!" exclaimed poor Julia, in the hope of turning him aside from what now appeared to be a settled purpose.

"I am repaid ten thousand times over, let me tell you, in that man's whole-hearted friendship, and that of his womanly sister, to say nothing of yours — and Arthur's — for all I had it in my power to do for him."

A sudden change of countenance in Julia, as he uttered the name of Arthur, made him pause, and look at her for a moment, with an expression of surprise.

"In a word, therefore," he continued — with many pauses, and much embarrassment, and great humility of manner, and in a much lower voice — "I have made up my mind at last, to have the question settled — a question of life or death for me, whatever it may be for you — and now, having offered you my heart, full to overflowing with such love, as a woman like you would wish to inspire, a deep, reverential, and tender affection — devout and serious — I wait your answer."

Julia made no reply. Her eyes were brimful, and so was her heart, and her lips moved; but no sound escaped them.

"Well," said he, somewhat gloomily, at last, after waiting a reasonable time, without receiving a word of reply — "I will not insist on your answering in words — your silence ought to be enough to satisfy me — and I ought to have understood you from the first — *but*," he added, after a short pause — "but, although I cannot bear suspense, almost any certainty being better than suspense to people of my character, I can bear hope; and I beg of you therefore" — taking the little hand once more, between both of his — "before I say farewell, it may be forever, Julia, for I cannot bear to see you as I have, without some hope — nor can I be satisfied with a second place where I have aspired to the first — I beg of you, dearest of women, to signify to me in some way — I care not how — by some word or look of encouragement, or by the silent pressure of the dear hand I am now holding to my heart — if it be possible, I mean — that I may be allowed to hope — that there is, in fact, no repugnance on your part, no insurmountable hindrance."

"I have sometimes thought," he added, after a little hesitation; "but no, I will not so wrong you — I will not so affront your generous nature, as to believe such a thing possible."

"What mean you, Mr. Fay?" murmured poor Julia, looking up with an expression of surprise.

"Nothing, Julia."

"But you did mean something, dear friend," laying her hand upon his arm, "and I must beg of you to deal plainly with me, as you promised — and I will be as frank with you."

"Upon such conditions — with all my heart! May I be allowed to ask, dear friend, if you are under any interfering engagement?"

"None whatever."

"One word more — may I be allowed to hope?"

Julia tried to answer — but her strength was all gone — she could not articulate — her stately carriage gave way — she sank into the chair — hesitated, and grew more and more embarrassed — the longer she hesitated.

"In other words, dear Julia — is there any insurmountable hindrance in my way?"

"My friend, I must answer you — I must, and I will! You talk of loving a creature of God with all your heart and soul, and with all your strength — you have reminded me of what you yourself call the *everlasting companionship*, that a woman should look for in marriage."

"Well."

"And yet, my friend — my dear friend! — you are not a religious man!"

Mr. Fay started up, and began walking the floor; but soon stopped.

"Where then, with my views, would be that *everlasting companionship*, which you do me no more than justice in believing I should hope for — *if I ever marry?*"

"If you *ever* marry, Julia!"

"You may be surprised — you may smile — to hear a young woman like me, with so many inducements to marriage, declare, as I do now, in all seriousness, that I do not believe in marriage!"

"Not believe in marriage!"

"That is, I do not believe that marriage is a condition absolutely indispensable for the happiness of woman, or for the development of true womanhood; nay, more — I do not believe that I shall ever be married. I would rather live, and rather die, in such single blessedness as I have sometimes heard of, and once or twice known of, than be the companion of the greatest and best man that ever breathed, if — on account of our different religious views, I had reason to fear that our separation at the death-bed of either, would be an everlasting separation! And therefore — do not misunderstand me, I beseech you!"

The poor girl was entirely overcome, and a passionate burst of tears and sobbing followed, and she covered her face with her hands, and tried — and tried — but all in vain, to recover the self-possession she had lost, before it was too late.

"Farewell! — I am satisfied — there is no hope, I see plainly," said Mr. Fay. "I thank you with all my heart" — pressing his lips to her forehead, before she could prevent him — and catching up his hat, and pulling it down over his eyes, he hurried away without stopping to look behind him, though he afterwards re-

membered, as he thought over the whole interview, and recalled incident after incident with a flash of resentful impatience and mortification — and then, with somewhat of self-reproach, and a feeling of amazement, that he should have been so carried away by a preposterous hope — that, on opening the door suddenly, a shadow fell athwart his way — and there was a faint distant rustling, and the sound of retreating footsteps, through a passage that lay in shadow, and led to a distant wing of the cottage — a row of apartments occupied by the Major and Arthur before Charles came — a sort of addition, or afterthought, such as you often meet with in the rambling incoherency of country-seats, where the owners are constantly changing; but he paid no attention to all this at the time, nor did he remember what he had said to the Major, as they met, until he heard a voice calling after him, just as the carriage turned off into the highway.

The coachman drew up — and the Major appeared all out of breath, and looking not a little astonished.

"Why! what is the meaning of all this, my dear Sir?" said he. "I thought you wanted to see me — and we supposed you secured for dinner, at least; and now" — looking up, and seeing the face of Mr. Fay, he stopped suddenly as if the whole truth had flashed upon him, all at once, with overwhelming conviction.

The change he saw was awful. There was a death-like pallor, — perspiration about the mouth, — and a damp chillness when their hands met, which sent a shiver through all his arteries.

"No, my dear friend, — no, no," said Mr. Fay, — "I have no business with you now; though I did hope to have — and my engagements elsewhere will not allow me to dine with you today, however much I might desire it — *under other circumstances.*"

The last words were breathed, rather than spoken; and the good Major had no heart for further investigation. Pressing the hand he held between both of his, he added, with deep emotion, — "God strengthen you!"

Mr. Fay returned the pressure in silence — drew back into the furthest corner of the carriage — and the coachman, at a look from the Major, started off, on a good round trot, leaving

him just where he stood, in the middle of the dusty highway, with his arms folded upon his chest, and looking after the carriage, as if not quite certain whether he was awake or asleep.

"Well, upon my word, Uncle George!" said Charles, coming up behind him, and touching him on the shoulder — "I hope you have not lost yourself."

"Not altogether, my dear Charles; but really, I am half-disposed to think there would be an advantage sometimes, in losing ourselves entirely, as we do in our sleep."

"Well — what has happened? You look troubled — was not that Mr. Fay in the carriage I saw yonder?"

"Yes — we have just parted."

"No bad news, I hope?"

"I don't know, Charles — I hardly know what to think. That I am grieved, and greatly disappointed, I acknowledge, for I believe I had set my heart upon what I now see was a foolish and presumptuous hope."

Charles turned a questioning look toward his uncle, but said nothing.

"The truth is, my dear nephew — and I may as well make a clean breast of it — I have long been troubled about your sister."

"About my sister! — and how, pray?"

"Well — the fact is, I want to see her well married."

Charles threw up his head with a look of astonishment, and then, seeing how profoundly in earnest his uncle was, he checked a smile, which was just beginning to show itself about his mouth, and grew very serious.

"And what says Aunt Elizabeth?"

"I hardly know — women have their own views about marriage, you know."

"So I should be apt to believe, uncle."

"And we have our notions, too — and it so happens, that while I have no doubt she would be glad to see Julia well married and settled for life, as glad as I should be, yet somehow or other we have never interchanged a word upon the subject, but once — and that was in relation to Mr. Fay."

"Have you ever said anything to Julia about Mr. Fay?"

"Not a syllable."

"Has Aunt Elizabeth, do you know?"

"Never a word, I am quite sure."

"Anything by either of you, on the subject of marriage?"

"Never — but why do you ask?"

"Because, Uncle George, whatever may be your reasons, or Aunt Elizabeth's, for wishing my dear sister well married, if she could find a man worthy of her, I am quite satisfied that she has about made up her mind, conscientiously and deliberately, never to run the risk of marriage."

"Poh, poh, Charles! I hope you do not believe in such things — there, there! don't be angry — your sister is one of a thousand, I acknowledge, and wholly incapable of saying what she does not mean; but I have heard so much of these young women, highly gifted, and every way qualified for happiness in the married state, who have made up their minds, again and again, I dare say, never to marry, that I confess to you I have no great faith in their resolution, if the right man falls in their way. Stop, Charles — don't answer till you have heard me through — I have an example, which has come to my knowledge within the last eight-and-forty hours. What think you of Miss Webb — Sallie Webb?"

"What do I think of her! Why, that she is a great, showy, beautiful, overgrown, saucy ——"

"That'll do, Charles! — that's enough! — I understand you. You think of her very much as we all did six months ago — but *we* have changed our opinions of late."

"Ah! — indeed! — *We!*"

"Yes — and notwithstanding her oddities, and her extravagances, we have come to the conclusion — all of us, my boy — that she has a heart — a large and generous heart — and that her understanding and her education are of the best."

"Well."

"Well — not long ago, this very woman, as I have been assured by those who have always known her — her aunt Wentworth and Mr. Bayard among the rest — had not only made up her mind that marriage was all a mistake, or, as she called it, a humbug, and that nineteen times out of twenty, the woman who

leaves a comfortable home in her father's house, to take up with a stranger, is only jumping out of the frying-pan into the fire — I use her own language — but that she had fully made up her mind never to marry."

"Well — and what then?"

"Why then, Charles — I have only to say ——"

Charles thought he saw signs of embarrassment in the good Major, as he proceeded.

"I have only to say," repeated the Major, "that within the last eight-and-forty hours, this very woman — this high-spirited and most determined enemy of marriage — as I have good reason to believe — has begun to reconsider the question, and to betray symptoms of change."

"Ah, my good uncle — are you there!"

The Major laughed — but refused to explain himself.

"And now, Charles," he added, "I hope you do not encourage your sister in this thing?"

"She does not need encouragement, Uncle George. You know Julia — and you know she is not a woman to shift about with every wind that blows."

"But how do you know that she has about made up her mind, as you say, never to marry?"

"Because, after Edith and I had come to a right understanding upon the subject, they had many a serious talk about marriage, and the dangers, and trials, and the responsibilities of marriage, under the most favorable circumstances; and just as Edith had refused to couple her fate with mine, so long as I continued 'without God and without hope in the world' — Julia declared, that however dear any human being might be to her, and however decided her admiration for him, nothing would induce her to enter into the relationship of marriage with him, not only so long as he might be a man of the world — a self-righteous man — a careless unbeliever — but so long as there was any great essential difference in their religious views; and on the whole, therefore, said she to Edith, 'as I do not believe in marriage, as a necessity — nor even as a "consummation devoutly to be wished" or greatly desired; as I do not believe that the unmarried are *obliged* to be unhappy, while I know the married often are — I

have about made up my mind never to marry.' But, I say, Uncle George, what meant you just now, when I woke you out of your brown-study, and you confessed you were disappointed and troubled, and then brought up Mr. Fay?"

"It is but fair, Charles — and the sooner you know what I suppose to be the simple truth of this affair, the better. You have understood, of course, that Mr. Fay was a great admirer of Julia, and was likely to offer himself one day or another?"

"Yes — I have had a hint from Edith; and ever since the trial, I suppose Arthur and you and Aunt Elizabeth have considered it a settled thing?"

"Pretty much."

"And what has happened now? Has he offered himself?"

"I think so."

"And with what result, pray?"

"Judging from appearances — for we have not interchanged a word upon the subject — Mr. Fay has just left the cottage, a disappointed, if not a heart-broken man."

"I am glad of it, Uncle George!"

"Glad of it, Charles! You astonish me! Why, we all thought you had the highest opinion of Mr. Fay."

"And so I have, Uncle George — as a man — as a lawyer — as a friend; but excuse me — not as the husband of my sister."

"Well, nephew, I do not ask you why nor wherefore. I have seen, as I thought, a want of sympathy between you; and it may be that you have adopted some of Arthur's prejudices; and I am well aware that we are not to be reasoned out of our dislikes, or antipathies."

"Dear uncle! do not misunderstand me. Arthur has never spoken to me of Mr. Fay, but in the highest possible terms; and, if I know myself, the repugnance I feel is not founded upon the experience of others; but I acknowledge that I do feel a sort of antipathy toward him — a dislike, which, but for what has just happened, you would never have been the wiser for."

"Can it be that you have so far adopted the opinions of Julia, as to take into view the laxity of his religious notions?"

"No, it is not that, Uncle George. However greatly we may differ in our religious views, I am afraid that my chief objection

would not lie there. Julia is right, I acknowledge — and so was Edith, when she flung me off — but both are too sublimated for me. I am not unreasonable in my exaltation; and to tell you the truth, I don't believe *men* are ever so. Perhaps they count more upon their influence after marriage, in bringing a wife to her bearings."

"May be so — at any rate, as a matter of fact, dear Charles, I hold that women are much more conscientious than we are; and altogether more self-denying and self-sacrificing."

"To be sure they are, Uncle George! or how could they ever hope to get through the world, as they do, under the trials and afflictions of marriage?"

"Perhaps I am going too far, Charles; but, between ourselves, I should like to know why you are glad of Mr. Fay's disappointment?"

"I cannot refuse a request so reasonable. My objection is this — the man has no heart — no more heart than a grindstone. At the best, he is only a wonderful actor!"

The Major started back, with astonishment — and seemed greatly perplexed and troubled; and then, after walking a few rods in silence, he stopped, and turning toward Charles, and laying his hand upon his arm, he begged him never to breathe such a thought again while he lived.

"Not that you are altogether wrong, dear Charles," he said — "for I must acknowledge to you that I have had a sinking of the heart sometimes, when he has appeared most carried away by a generous, or enthusiastic emotion — and have many times had my secret misgivings, when he was holding forth upon great themes, out of his profession — and far above it — as if inspired; but still, if you had seen him as I did, half an hour ago, hiding himself in the farther corner of the coach, with his hat pulled down over his eyes — and pale as death — and trembling, with a cold and clammy touch, that sent a chill through me — I think you would have been forced to acknowledge, that he has a heart — I never saw such a face, nor so sudden a change, in all my life."

"Poor fellow! I hope we have not wronged him; but here we are! and here comes Carlo! and Charley! and Arthur, and the nursery maid."

"And the nurse! — we must beware of that girl — I caught her listening at the door, just now, while Mr. Fay was in conference with Julia."

"The jade! — poor Carlo!"

At this moment, up flew a distant window, and two or three voices were heard screaming after the baby; and Carlo came tumbling head over heels about the feet of his old master; and the baby following afar off, with the Major's gold-headed cane for a horse, and little Edith hurrying after him with her shawl dragging after her along the gravel walk, and her hair flying loose, and the pretty chambermaid, who had been lately converted into a nurse, loitering on the way, and blushing and simpering, as if somewhat afraid of coming too near the handsome gentleman who had caught her at the keyhole, not long before, to say nothing of Charles and Arthur, two of the finest-looking young fellows you would wish to see anywhere.

"Dinner! dinner!" shouted Arthur, as he came near; and to dinner they all went, without a word of objection.

CHAPTER XXV.

To say that Arthur was overjoyed, when all these events came to his knowledge, as they did by little and little, within the next few days, would be not far from the truth; and yet, there was a mixture of sadness — and something of self-reproach — and a trembling apprehensiveness, that would not allow him to rest with any degree of assurance upon the new hope, which had sprung up of itself, as it were, and against the convictions of his understanding, when he knew of a truth, and in a way not to be questioned, that the man he had so much feared, was no longer a candidate for the happiness which he coveted more than life. He was not acquainted with the particulars — nor did he wish to know anything more than the simple fact, that, after a long private interview with Julia, Mr. Fay had left her with the look, not of a happy, but of a disappointed man, with a hurried, though faltering step, and with his hat pulled down over his eyes.

Not a word from Julia had reached him; not a hint from his mother to encourage or soothe him; and though he had reason to believe that Edith knew more than all the others, of what had happened, yet he understood that even she knew little or nothing from Julia herself; and that Charles had been chiefly indebted for what he knew to his uncle George. The nursery-maid, to be sure, might have enlightened them all, for she had been watchful from the first, and while waiting outside the door, which opened and shut so mysteriously two or three times, of itself, you remember, had overheard the whole; but no inquiry was made of her, and no encouragement was offered, when she ventured to approach the forbidden subject, as with "a fire shut up in her bones." The Major had given them a hint which put them all upon their guard — even little Edith, who was greatly attached

to the poor girl, and always ready to make allowances for her — so young — so pretty — and *so very* inquisitive.

As for Julia, to judge by her looks, and by the mournful sweetness of her tones, her silent thoughtfulness, and pallor, one would have supposed her to be the disappointed party. Instead of a cheerful, buoyant step, and a triumphant, though subdued smile, to be looked for in such cases, however well the secret may be kept, there was a kind of patient, sorrowful, uncomplaining listlessness of manner, wholly unlike anything they had ever seen before in her, which told, more plainly than the plainest language ever uttered by the lips of woman, how deeply she felt, and how greatly she suffered.

Not even to Edith, would she acknowledge anything more than what she called her veneration for Mr. Fay — it was not mere friendship — it was something higher and holier; but, although little or nothing was communicated by Julia — much was understood by Edith, and Charles, and Arthur, without the help of language; and it must not be wondered at, all things considered, that, when Edith uttered an occasional word of encouragement, in the shape of inquiry, and Charles, who had always loved Arthur, and must have understood something of what had happened between him and Julia, before Mr. Fay crossed their path, said nothing to discourage him, Arthur began to revolve anew the great purpose he had so long cherished in the holiest chamber of his heart, as the object, under heaven, best worth living for.

Already were his long meditated business arrangements under way, with the most encouraging prospects and assurances; upon the strength of which, it was thought safe, even by Mr. Bayard, for Charles and little Edith to begin to think seriously of marriage; and after a brief negotiation, it was determined by the help of that worthy man, who had long watched over little Edith, and taken a deep interest in Charles, that by the end of a year after the copartnership was under way, that marriage, if no other, should take place.

Arthur and Charles had capital enough to begin with; and their credit with Uncle George and Mr. Bayard, was, in the language of the day, "unlimited."

There was another negotiation a-foot, however, which gave two or three of the parties a little uneasiness. The bachelor uncle was growing more and more particular every day, about his hair and moustaches — and for the first time in all his life, perhaps, he never went by a glass without stopping for a look, and straightening up, or loosening his hair, with a careless flourish, or twirling his cane, as he had never twirled it before. Still — as there was no help for it — not only were the children beginning to feel somewhat reconciled to what they called a "dispensation" — or in other words, to the loss of a large inheritance — their good uncle's heart, perhaps, to say nothing of his handsome property, which, if he died a bachelor, they might be sure of; but even Mrs. Maynard, who, when the suggestion was first made, appeared to have no patience with her deluded brother, had now become quite reasonable, owing to the representations of Mr. Bayard, who insisted upon it, that Sallie Webb — though a woman of the world, was a very superior woman of the world — with a generous heart, and very decided principle; so decided, in fact, as to be almost a religious principle — and that, notwithstanding her extravagances of speech, and oddities of behavior, a woman of downright good sense, with well-established household habits of economy and thrift; so that — on the whole — if George and Sallie, as he continued to call them, should make a match of it — his good sister and the children ought to be well satisfied.

These opinions deliberately formed, and oftentimes expressed, by such a man as William Bayard, and corroborated by Miss Wentworth, in a confidential chat with Aunt Elizabeth, began to have their effect, so that within a month or two after Sallie had well-nigh lost caste forever with the sister, by her treatment of the brother, she was beginning to be thought of as a very suitable and proper appendage to the "old gentleman," as she often called him to his face — but in such a pleasant way, and with such a gurgling laugh, that the poor man was delighted not only with her, but with himself, and often owned up to his real age, without bating an hour — "letting the delicious secret out," when there was not the least occasion for doing so, as if to satisfy the mischievous girl, that he had no wish to be thought younger

— no, not by so much as a day — and that he didn't care who knew it.

Mrs. Archibald too, had come to believe that Sallie Webb, who, for a long time after the day of trial had been to her as a sort of nightmare, was just the properest person in the world for the dear, good Major; that nobody so well knew how to manage him — and that all her outlay that afternoon in the court-house, when she got hold of him by both hands, and literally danced round him, with the tears streaming down her cheeks, was all honest, and fair, and proper — and no trick at all — but just the outbreak of long smothered generous feelings, which did her infinite honor, though to be sure, the way she had of expressing them was a little strange, and might have been misunderstood; to all which there was nothing more to be said. It was clear enough that all their minds were made up — and that the sooner Sallie Webb and the Major came to a proper understanding, the better it would be for both. As if they had not done so already!

Arthur saw the working of these new elements, and their tendency toward marriage, with a feeling of uneasiness. Not a day went by — not an hour — but he was reminded of what he began to speak about, with a counterfeited pleasantry, as the inevitable doom of, at least, four different persons, who had been growing together about his heart, year after year.

And so, it happened that one cool, pleasant afternoon, as he lay upon the sofa, watching the clouds, while they floated away, like a bannered host, in gold and purple — after emptying their treasures upon the cottage, in a tumultuous rattling shower, with thunder and lightning to match — Julia sitting by the window, and his mother busy with her work, and little Edith romping with Carlo and the baby, upon the floor — the picture of a happy home, overflowing with the sunshine of the heart, and the deep, inward music of different natures brought into harmonious relationship, took such possession of him, all at once — looming up out of the far future, as he looked at Julia, and thought of her in that relationship, that before he knew it, his eyes filled with tears.

The baby saw it, and was troubled; after looking at him, a

few moments, he stole up to the sofa, and Arthur was recalled to himself, by feeling a little soft hand thrust into his, which hung down over the sofa pillow, and then slowly and quietly withdrawn, leaving two marbles behind, which the poor child had been playing with, and prized so highly, that he wouldn't go to sleep in his crib, till he had felt for them under his pillow, and found them all safe.

"Bless your dear little heart, Charley!" said Arthur, wiping his eyes, and catching the boy up in his arms. "How beautiful he is, to be sure!" turning to Julia, as he spoke, and sitting up and giving the child a toss, which — for some reason or other, not then explained — brought the color into Julia's cheeks, and set her eyes dancing with an expression which reminded him of other and happier days.

On turning from the window to answer the exclamation, Julia saw, by Arthur's eyes, that his heart was full — brimful, and running over; and there were signs of embarrassment, and hurrying changes of color, which carried her back to the days of her girlhood, when they used to romp together — in a serious way — among the blue corn-flowers, and apple-blossoms of Old England.

"Yes, very beautiful, and very generous, Arthur," said she, in a soft, low voice, that the child might not understand, while she stretched forth her arms, and he sprang into them with a cry, which brought the nurse from her hiding-place, just outside the door, where she had been waiting, she said, for a long while, to give the dear little fellow his supper.

In spite of all remonstrances, and expostulations, and kickings, the child was carried off, and then Edith followed — and then Mrs. Archibald — and then Aunt Elizabeth — and then, before they knew it, Arthur and Julia, on turning away from the open window, out of which they had both been looking, found themselves alone — altogether alone — with just enough shadowy coolness about them to make it very pleasant, and a little dangerous — if they had anything particular to say — and still more so, perhaps, if they had not.

Were these arrangements preconcerted? Nobody knows — and nobody thought of propounding the question till long afterward.

"Now that we are alone together — once more — Cousin Julia," said Arthur, in a low voice, and with some little trepidation, "I should like to use the privilege of a friend — or brother, if you continue of the opinion you so kindly avowed, on our way back from our first interview with Edith — so far as to understand, if I may, without meddling — for every heart, we are told, knoweth its own bitterness, and a stranger intermeddleth not therewith — I believe I am wrong in the words, though I know well enough what I mean" — he was beginning to lose himself.

"Nor do I remember the words; but there is something," said Julia, with a mischievous, though faint smile, as if she more than half suspected what was coming, "about a stranger's intermeddling with our *joy*."

"I understand you, Julia, — and am very unwilling to misquote the language of Scripture; but what I wanted to say was this. We are under the greatest obligations to our friend, Mr. Fay ——"

Julia sat more erect, and her eyes grew thoughtful; and there was a slight change in her breathing, and the smile vanished from her lip.

"That you had the highest opinion of him, I know ——"

"*Had!* Cousin Arthur."

"Had, or *have*, Julia, I care not which, so that I obtain what I desire."

Julia grew more and more serious, and there was a troubled movement in the clear depth of her eyes, which alarmed poor Arthur.

"And you know, Cousin Julia — or *Sister* Julia, if you say so — that we have all agreed with you in our estimate of that man's character."

"I am glad of it," murmured Julia.

"Well then — to come to the point — as I happen to know that he has long entertained the highest opinion of you — for he has often said as much to me, and to others in my hearing; and as, until within the last few weeks, he has been a constant — almost a daily visitor — and as I no longer see him here — and his name is hardly mentioned now — and as I meet him almost

every day, when I am in the city — I want to know from you, how he is to be treated — just as usual, or otherwise? I do not ask your reasons — I do not desire to know what has happened between you — but I should like to have a hint from you, that I may feel more at ease, and know just how to behave, when I see him."

"On the whole, Cousin Arthur," said Julia, after considering a while, and weighing her words — one by one — as they were slowly uttered, "although at first you startled me, and the question appeared very strange — and almost improper —— "

"Julia!"

"Hear me through, Cousin Arthur — *almost* improper, I said, but now I think otherwise; and I acknowledge the question to be both reasonable and proper, and I freely concede, that, as a member of the family — as a dear friend — to say nothing of our relationship as cousins — or as brother and sister by adoption, at least, you are entitled to a satisfactory answer. You do not wish me to go into particulars nor to give reasons; but as our friend Mr. Fay has not called for two or three weeks, and may be comparatively a stranger to us hereafter — though not for a long time, we hope — and you are constantly meeting him, as you say, it seems to be but fair that you should be advised to treat him, always, and everywhere, and under all circumstances, just as if nothing had happened here to change the relationship we have always found so pleasant and so profitable. There! I hope I have answered you as you deserve, and that you will remember my wishes."

"With all my heart, Julia — but, inasmuch as he never comes over to the cottage now, and never inquires about the family, but in the most general way, you must acknowledge that sometimes I may find it rather embarrassing to treat him — after so great a change — as if nothing had happened."

"Very true."

"One word more. I am encouraged by your frankness to go a step further — will you permit me to ask if you are on good terms with him now?"

"On the best possible terms, Arthur, so far at least as I am concerned — I can, of course, only answer for myself."

"And you have as high an opinion of him as ever, I hope?"

"Higher than ever — much higher."

"Well then," rising and going to the door — and then to the open window, and looking out into the shrubbery on both sides, and then walking to and fro, the whole length of the room, three or four times, as if to satisfy himself that he had nothing to fear from eavesdroppers, and then stopping suddenly before Julia, and pushing a chair up to her side and speaking hurriedly and earnestly, as if he had no time to lose, and meant to be understood at once, without circumlocution or subterfuge — "well then — you have acknowledged enough to justify me in saying what I now do — look at me, Julia! judge for yourself by what you see here — by all that you have known of me hitherto — and by what has happened to us both, and to me more than to you, within the last few months, for you had tasted the cup of salvation before — judge for yourself, I say, whether I am likely to be deceived, and whether I should be likely to profess what I do not feel. You do not answer — you do not even look at me, Julia; but I know you believe me — and when I say to you here — *here*, upon my knees ——"

"No, no, not upon your knees, Arthur! I cannot bear that!" said the poor girl, springing to her feet. "Say whatever you please to me in the attitude of a man, of a Christian, and I will hear you patiently; but never! — never while I breathe, will I suffer any human being to kneel to me!"

Arthur stood up; and for a moment looked abashed and well-nigh discouraged; but when he saw the proud-spirited young woman grow suddenly pale — and tremble from head to foot, while her eyes filled with tears — he took heart again.

"Right, Julia! you are altogether right! and I acknowledge, with shame and sorrow, that I had forgotten myself — and you — and our heavenly Father — or I should have been afraid to kneel even to you; and I thank you for the reproof; and shall never forget the lesson, I hope, while I breathe. Be seated, I pray you, and hear me through."

A long pause followed. Julia trembled violently, and there was a look of piteous irresolution — almost of terror and self-abandonment, as she turned away her face to the window, while

Arthur planted himself directly in front of her, without daring to touch her hand — poor fellow! — though both were trembling and fluttering in her lap, like live birds, waiting to be caged.

"Upon my word, Julia — I cannot bear this! I know not what ails me. I have thought you understood me — I have tried to explain myself — but I cannot — I am bewildered — wandering, I believe — and must come to the point, or give up the ghost!"

Julia started; and as Arthur dropped into a chair, it so happened that his hand touched hers — and she did not instantly snatch it away.

"In a word then, Julia Parry, I *love you* — love you with all the strength of my nature! and have done so from my earliest boyhood — and — and — bear with me a few moments longer, I beseech you; and when I saw the only man I was ever afraid of, taking the place near you which I had so coveted for years — and supplanting me — shall I tell you what my hope was? — I must! I will! — it was that, as I knew your high principles, and believed him to be just what I had always been — a worldling — my hope was, that he would offer himself to you, before any change had taken place in his unbelief, and then I felt sure — absolutely sure — that you would refuse him — even though he were otherwise all you might have desired, to make you happy. You are amazed, Julia — and I do not wonder, for how can you know, that with such a wicked hope in my heart — which I think has just been realized — though I do not ask you — I might not be a deceiver myself, or perhaps a self-deceiver."

"No, no, Cousin Arthur! I believe you — I believe in your truthfulness — and I would not allow myself to suppose, for one moment, nor have you suppose for one moment that you are mistaken. God, I believe, has changed your heart, and the heart of my poor brother, and it may be in answer to our prayers — and not for the world, my dear cousin, would I have either of you thrown back upon himself. I do not know so much about my brother — I am not acquainted with the particulars — but Aunt Elizabeth, and Mrs. Archibald, and little Edith, have talked freely with him, and they are all satisfied — though, to tell you the truth, I think he has had a very different experience from yours —

about which, allow me to say, dear Arthur, we have none of us a shadow of misgiving."

Arthur covered his face and wept.

"And I will be frank with you," continued Julia — almost sobbing, "for you deserve it; from our earliest childhood, you have been very dear to me — and you have been growing dearer and dearer — up to the time when you gave yourself away to your Saviour, as we humbly hope, which seemed to be the only thing needed to render you not only a loveable but a safe companion for life to any woman worthy of you."

"God bless you for that, dear Julia!"

"Not so fast, Arthur! While I acknowledge this, and am willing to go further, much further, and to say in language that cannot be misunderstood, coming from the lips of a modest woman, that with all your faults — and they are neither few nor small, Arthur, you are the only person I ever saw, for whom I have ever felt anything of the tenderness I should hope to feel for a husband — there! — I have said it! — and now that you have become, as we all hope and believe, a child of God, thereby removing what would have been otherwise a perpetual barrier — the only man I would choose, if I were free to choose to-morrow."

"Free to choose, Julia! What mean you! are you not free to choose?"

"No, Arthur — I am not; if I were — you must allow me to finish — you are the only man I ever knew, with whom I should be willing to trust my happiness here and hereafter."

"Merciful Father! — not free to choose!" repeated Arthur, in a paroxysm of astonishment and dismay.

"Let me explain myself," — laying her hand very gently upon his bowed head, and trying to soothe his agony. "I must not be misunderstood; we have known each other too long — we have loved each other too much, to have any further concealments; and as I now see my way clear — God helping me — I cannot allow you to misunderstand my feelings toward you. I may have appeared capricious — even heartless, at times, dear Arthur — but, if you could look into my heart, I know you would forgive me. Before you knew the blessedness of that hope, which

has changed you, and brought you, as we believe, out of darkness into God's marvellous light, I saw your affection for me, but I was afraid to acknowledge it, for my mind was made up, never to be 'unequally yoked,' and almost, never to marry. And after the change that followed, so suddenly, and perhaps I might say, so unexpectedly, for though we prayed and hoped, I am afraid we did not altogether *expect* the change — and were taken by surprise, when it happened — I was afraid to encourage the feeling I saw."

"And why, Julia?"

"For two reasons. I had about made up my mind, as I have said before, never to marry."

"So I have understood — but the other reason, if you please."

"And certainly" — laying both hands clasped upon his — and speaking but just above her breath — "certainly, *never to marry with a cousin!* O Arthur! dearest Arthur! if you knew the unutterable misery and hopelessness that I have witnessed — and that we have had in our own family, and among our nearest kindred, from the intermarriage of blood relations, you would sooner die, than give way to any such preference! Talk with your own dear mother — and ask her about the escape she herself has had from unspeakable wretchedness, where the holiest feelings of her heart, and all her hopes of happiness on earth were at stake — and beg her to tell you the truth, and the whole truth."

"She has told me the truth, and the whole truth — and I have been trying for months to disbelieve it — to hope against hope, dear Julia — O God! that we should be so weak where we so much need uncommon strength! — and I ought to have understood her warning, and foreseen what is now before m O Julia! Julia! and this dreadful hindrance then, is what you meant by saying you were not free to choose!"

"Even so, Arthur!"

"So that I have your assurance — dearest of women! — that, but for this obstacle — a canon of the Almighty himself! — you would be willing to risk your happiness with me, here and hereafter?"

"Even so, dear Arthur" — flinging her arms about his neck

in a sudden transport of thankfulness to find him so reasonable, and sobbing as if her very heart would break — and then locking her hands together in silent prayer, and resting them upon his shoulder — and leaning upon them, as he touched her forehead with his trembling mouth, for the first time in all his life, while the tumultuous throbbing of her heart so shook his manhood that he was ready to sink upon his knees at her feet, she whispered — "my brother! oh, my brother!"

"Sister! *dear* sister!" he murmured in reply, and instantly! as if a light from above had flashed into both of their hearts, and purified them, as with fire, from all earthiness and selfishness, they stood up together — facing each other — looking into each other's eyes — and holding each other by the hands — transfigured, as it were — in speechless transport, and full of uplifting hope; forgetting all their past sorrows and trials, and looking into the future, as if they saw through the opening heavens, and were already on their shining way upward, a brother and sister, linked hand in hand forever, and journeying toward the rest appointed for the loving and the faithful.

"God bless and strengthen you, my dear brother!" said she, sinking down slowly into the deep sofa.

"And you too, Julia — my beloved sister!" he answered, as he settled into the chair he had been occupying in front of her, and still retaining both of her hands in his.

A long silence followed. Their hearts were too full for speech — and while tears of joy ran slowly down the cheeks of Julia, and fell, drop after drop on Arthur's trembling hands, there was a mingling of sorrow and hope — of disappointment — of quenched bitterness and holy trust in the heart of Arthur, such as he had never felt before — not even at the time when he left Julia, and rushed up to his chamber, and threw himself upon his knees in the anguish of his troubled spirit, on discovering as he believed, at the time, that another had obtained possession of what he had so long coveted, and with such delirious, though unacknowledged earnestness, year after year.

"How strange!" said he, at last, in a low dreaming voice, like that of one talking in his sleep. "How very strange! that in the shipwreck of all our earthly hopes, when clouds and thick dark-

ness are round about our way, and we are crushed with a sudden calamity — overwhelmed with disappointment, perhaps, just where we had garnered up our hearts — and humbled to the very dust, for our presumption, we should so often see another light, which might have been overlooked, but for the dreariness of our way and the darkness and the desolation round about us; and be comforted and strengthened, just when there would seem to be no help for us — and no hope. Of a truth, dear Julia, now that we understand each other, and you grant me the assurance that I have so long yearned for, and hungered and thirsted after — I begin to believe that 'it is good to be afflicted.'"

"'Before I was afflicted I went astray,'" whispered Julia.

"Nay more — that we may all, if we desire it, come to 'glory in our tribulations!'"

"My dear brother! How glad I am to find your thoughts all setting that way!"

"Julia! — sister! — I will now acknowledge to you what I have been hoping for, and looking for — but never till now have breathed aloud into mortal ear. Though your brother and I have entered into certain business arrangements — very unpalatable to me, I assure you — for I could not withstand the persuasions of Uncle George, without having reasons to give which I was waiting for, and hoping for — yet, for months, my heart was fixed upon a very different path in life — the last in the world perhaps that you, and others who have longest known me, would be likely to dream of — and if the result of our present interview had been what, I must acknowledge, I not only hoped, but expected it to be, I should have abandoned all thought of a business-copartnership with Charles, and have entered upon that other path — God helping me — and you, Julia, as my companion for life and pleasant counsellor, encouraging me ——"

"Upon my word, Cousin Arthur," said Julia, starting up with a faint cry, and lifting her locked hands above her head — "I do believe I understand you! I believe, too, in foreshadowings! and that which I have prayed for, in the watches of the night, from the first day we knew of the great change that had happened to you, appears about to be accomplished! O merciful Father! let it be so, I pray thee, if consistent with thy will!"

"You have understood me then, dear Julia — but" — shaking his head, and speaking in a low mournful tone, as if communing with himself — "but, now it is all over — now it is too late."

"How so, Arthur! — how so, my dear brother! What hindereth now?"

"I should tremble to enter upon the ministry of reconciliation, a disappointed man!"

"But, Arthur — how are you a disappointed man? Would you have it otherwise?"

"I hardly know how to answer you. With your present views — enlightened and conscientious, and as I must acknowledge, reasonable — for whatever may be the exceptions, they are not to be foreseen, and of course not to be provided for, I would not have it otherwise. And yet, however strange it may appear to you, I feel disappointed, and am hardly yet reconciled to what I believe to be best for both. As a friend, faithful and affectionate, and capable of any sacrifice for my encouragement and help — as a beloved sister — to whom I may go with entire confidence and trust, now that the bitterness of the trial is over — you ought to be, and you must and shall be, so dear, that nothing, not even marriage, nor the tenderest companionship of earth, could make you more so!"

Another pause — long, deep, and almost painful to both, followed.

"But, Arthur — may I ask how long you have entertained these views?"

"Ever since I first came to my senses."

"And you never mentioned them, even to your mother?"

"Never."

"And why not, pray?"

"I had no encouragement. I was not satisfied with myself. I had no reason to believe that I was wanted — much less that I was called; for though the fields were whitening to the harvest, and the laborers were few, the Lord of the harvest had vouchsafed no whispering to me. At first, I thought of being a missionary — of tearing my way through the bulwarks of empire in the East — and of going forth, not as a humble follower, but as a leader — not as a soldier of the cross, nor as a laborer in the

Lord's vineyard — but as a great captain! a champion of the true faith, and a conqueror! But, I soon found that the spirit within me — that unregenerate ambition, which had overmastered my whole nature — was the evil spirit of unbelief; and I cast myself upon my face before the Lord, in utter brokenness of heart, and with a feeling of horror, that no language can describe, and there came what I had never felt before — the blessedness of hope — the peace that passeth all understanding; and as God opened my eyes, by little and little, to bear the light — I saw the need of preparation, and have been at work, studying and preparing myself, day by day, for whatever I might be called upon to undertake or suffer — either at home or abroad — either now or hereafter."

"Wonderful!"

"Yes, my dear friend — I agree with you. It *is* wonderful! and it may be that God is now opening a way for me, which I had never thought of."

"It must be so, my brother! and the disappointed hope, of which you are half disposed to complain — though you do not murmur aloud — may be the very thing needed to finish your preparation for the work, and to set you free — 'in the glorious freedom of the gospel!'"

"It may be so, Julia; and to tell you the truth — I begin to believe it *is*."

"Arthur Maynard — my brave, good brother — you need encouragement; and you know where to go for the only encouragement worth having — but perhaps I may not be going too far, under all the circumstances, if I say to you, that I believe you are now entering upon your appointed path — and that God has set you apart for this very work — and prepared you for it, in many ways — and that he will sanctify you, if he has not already done so, even from your youth up, and that, if your mind be stayed on him — for in the Lord Jehovah is everlasting strength — you cannot mistake the way, and have nothing to fear."

"Thank you, Julia! God forever bless you for the comforting assurance!"

"I wonder more and more, at the turn our friendship — our love, I might say — has taken. I have not wholly recovered

from the astonishment I felt, when you first acknowledged yours for me. You took me by surprise, Arthur — and as I had long since given you up — there was a ringing in my ears, when you betrayed yourself so abruptly — and I was overwhelmed. But, now that we understand each other — and are about entering upon a higher life — I, never to marry — you, to find hereafter what you so richly deserve, a large-hearted and a wise-hearted woman, for your helper." ——

"No, no, Julia — never, never! I shall never marry."

"You think so, now, my dear brother; but make no rash promises; — you are made for the companionship of such a being, and if you enter the ministry, or go abroad as a missionary, you must not be alone, — 'all, all, alone.'"

"As you are to be, Julia?"

"No, Arthur — I shall not be alone. I am not going into the ministry — I shall not go abroad into the missionary field — at least, I think so — for mine, I believe, is a home mission — and a true woman will never be alone, where the Master has anything for her to do. She may preach the gospel silently. She may carry with her wherever she goes through the week, the perfume she has gathered in the garden of the Lord, every Sabbath day; and when she looks about her, and sees what provision has been made for all — and how indispensable it is, that all should coöperate — for who was ever converted without the help of man? ——"

"Not even the great Apostle himself perhaps — for he had been spoken to many times, Julia, before he saw the brightness above that of the sun, and heard that voice, of the elder brother."

"She will find enough to occupy her," continued Julia, in reply — "enough to the last hour of the longest life, and will never be alone, dear Arthur — not even at dead of night — nor in the secret place of prayer."

"How wonderful! I must say again. The table is spread — the feast prepared — messengers are sent everywhere — angel-messengers often — into all the cities, and villages, and houses, and into the uttermost parts of the earth — and all are invited and urged, and many perhaps are *compelled* to come up — and places of refreshment are opened all along the way, where the

poor pilgrim — dusty and foot-sore — and sometimes broken-hearted and weary of life, may stop and rest, and be strengthened with wine and milk — and with the bread of life — and with the water of salvation — without money and without price — and yet, oh Julia, my sister! the table is never full! and the feast is oftentimes untouched!"

At this moment, there was a loud joyful bark at the open window, and in came Carlo, tumbling head over heels into the lap of Julia — and the door opened — and one after another of the family entered, as if they were all tired of waiting — followed by the pretty nursery-maid, covered with evidence that she had been out among the wet roses and clambering honey-suckles, that overhung the open window, and leading Charley by the hand.

As they drew near the sofa, they all stopped and looked at one another, as if doubting the evidence of their own eyes; for there sat Arthur with Julia's hands in his — and both so deeply engaged, as to have heard nothing of their approach.

"Down, Carlo! down!" said Arthur; and then up rose Julia — and up rose Arthur — and there they stood facing the intruders, without a sign of embarrassment, or hurry, and with such a calm and beautiful expression of satisfied, innocent yearning, that nobody there doubted the issue of that long and trying interview.

"Allow me to congratulate you! dear Julia," said Edith, running up to her, and throwing her arms about her neck, and blubbering aloud.

"Not so fast, dear Edith," whispered Julia; "you misunderstand the whole matter. Hush, hush! I pray. Aunt Elizabeth! Uncle George! brother Charles! Mrs. Archibald! allow me to introduce to you my brother — my *beloved* brother — Mr. Arthur Maynard!"

"And allow me," said Arthur — catching a portion of Julia's free spirit, and exceedingly diverted at the expression of blank and hopeless astonishment he saw in all the countenances about him — "and allow me to introduce to you my *beloved* sister — my only sister — Miss Julia Parry!"

There was a moment of dead silence — and then, as if they were all satisfied with what they saw, and had no hope of any

further explanation, they interchanged looks and smiled — and then hurried off about their business — leaving the *mystery of "True Womanhood"* to be puzzled over all the rest of their lives.

And now for the catastrophe. The Major married Miss Webb — Charles took little Edith, who consented to put up with him at last — 'on trial' — Arthur began studying for the ministry under a devout and godly teacher — and when the parties were last heard of, there seemed to be some hope of an alliance between Mr. Bayard and Mrs. Archibald, who began to throw aside her furbelows and flounces, and to go — in a drab-colored silk, and a very plain bonnet — to the Friends' meeting.

Julia persevered — and so did Mr. Fay — and so did Arthur; and as they are all unmarried — though a twelvemonth has now gone by — it may be, that they will continue to persevere — at least for another twelvemonth; after which, something more may be heard of them — *perhaps*.

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